ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: MUSIC ON THE EDGE
An Annexation to the Music Conservatory of Tolima, Colombia

Juan Gabriel Benavides Millán, Master Of Architecture, 2005

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School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

The Conservatory is a historically significant cultural institution that gives the region of Tolima cultural identity and pride. The current physical setting of the school does not coincide with the stature of this organization.

Located on a site near the cliff of the downtown district of Ibagué, the capital of Tolima, the Conservatory has potential for a great view of adjacent topography. The site with my proposed development offers the following issues for consideration: the relationship of Ibagué's urban fabric to areas with steep topography and the architectural expression of an institution of lofty aspirations.

While creating a new edge, and providing the city with places to enjoy the view, the addition will complement existing buildings with installations well suited for the teaching of music, primary and secondary schools. Both Urban and architectural scales of design critically assess current development that is dilapidating Ibagué's urban quality.

MUSIC ON THE EDGE:
AN ADDITION TO THE MUSIC CONSERVATORY OF TOLIMA, COLOMBIA

By

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Preface

A Plea for the Study of Intermediate Cities

This thesis is a particular case within a context of transformation. This case is special due to its place in the historical center of an intermediate city, the importance of the institution for the identity of the region and the topography of the site. While addressing these more immediate issues, this thesis looks to open the discussion of the strategies of consolidation of places in a context of change of a particular type of city: the intermediate city in Colombia.

Even though in recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in the regional aspects of urban design and architecture, the bulk of architectural speculation and research is centered on the regions of Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, the Coffee growing region and the northern Caribbean Coast. These areas are the most prosperous and the most urbanized regions of Colombia. On the other end of the spectrum, other regions such as the Pacific coast, the Amazon and the eastern plains are understudied, with research focused on indigenous building typologies. It is not a coincidence that these areas are the poorest and most underdeveloped areas of Colombia.

The study of intermediate sized cities in Colombia is an untapped source of research. These cities, at present, are enduring a series of transformations that are product of economic pressures of the national economy and the armed conflict raging in the countryside. On the one hand, the stronger regions are draining other regions of professional human resources; on the other hand, there is a dramatic growth in migration of peasants that go to the city in search of better opportunities. This state of flux is shaping and transforming the city, its landscape and its demographics.

The large majority of the population of Colombia lives in these urban centers. Colombia is a country that is largely urban, with 70% of its inhabitants living in cities. This recent urbanization process has created a set of issues that are caused by the territorial configuration that comes with the transition from closed agricultural to open market economies of exporting goods and products. Problems include housing deficits, detrimental trends affecting the urban and natural environments and increment in ecological footprints of cities. Cities with the biggest population growth get the most attention from scholars and public policy makers. Smaller cities are deemed as cases that are similar to the bigger cities or as unworthy of study. The rest of the country deserves just as much attention to the biggest urban centers. In fact, most of the population lives in urban centers that don't have more than 1 million inhabitants. The growth rate, economic base and size of these centers vary from case to case.

In terms of urban consolidation and architecture, the biggest issues are the accommodation of large amounts of people in a short period of time without creating urban spaces of poor quality of execution and design. If we are not careful, we will destroy the memory and context of these cities before the urbanization boom as well as creating a new urban tissue of little value in terms of economic sustainability and livability.

This is my plea for attention to the intermediate city. This is my plea for the attention to the regional urban centers of Colombia. This thesis, its location and its thought process look to create interest in these dynamic urban contexts and perhaps plant the seeds for future research and professional development.

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Methodology: Defining the Problem

The theoretical exploration of this chapter seeks to provide the decision making process at urban and architectural design levels with a solid reasoned background. In order to define the strategies and the philosophical tools to be utilized, I will define the larger goals of this thesis according to the relationship of the Conservatory Annexation to nature, to the city and to the existing Patrimonial compound.

The goals of this thesis are divided in 3 areas:

- To create urban space and architecture in the border of the city
- To create permanence in an ever-changing context
- To imbue character in a building based on the "spirit" of program.

On the first topic I will explore the nature of border conditions. On the following subject I will expose the case for "weak architecture" as defined by Ignasi de Solà-Morales[1]. Finally, I will analyze the strategies posed by some contemporary architects to expose the elusive quality of "spirit" in architecture.

[1] Ignasi de Solà-Morales. "Weak Architecture", reprinted in Architecture Theory since 1968, ed. K. Michael Hays (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000).

Questions on the Nature of Border

> **Life is something distinct the other side of a membrane. Something distinct and unstable that wouldn't exist without that membrane safeguarding its difference. Life, the pure chemistry of knowing instability, subsists because it protects behind a wall… That membranous interface, pure protectionism, establishes advantageous asymmetries, dissimilar concentrations of this and that, which nourish or drain according to what's necessary. Life always lives "along-side" something.**
>
> **Ramon Folch, Membranes and Neighbors**[2]

The relationship of two or more different conditions has a point of contact, another instance. This instance is the border. We could define "border" as a condition that is produced by near contact of two different conditions. The more different the conditions, the more evident the border will be.

Architecture is a discipline that deals with the creation of borders. Walls, windows, roofs; these are membranes that create the condition outside vs. inside. These are interfaces that articulate the pressures of both sides. This articulation of border is one of the most important aspects of our profession. We articulate asymmetrical relationships with the natural and the man-made. When we have a clear understanding of this fact, then some strategies can be formulated. The following paragraphs study two concepts on the nature of limits. First I will expose the case for "blurred boundaries" and next I will explore a methodology to do a seemingly opposite effort of defining limits distinctively. I plan on combining the strengths of both approaches in my solution.

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[2] Conxita Balcells and Josepa Bru. Alongside: Boundaries, Borders and Frontiers. (Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2002).

Blurred Boundaries

> **In a recent essay on the question of realism in modern architecture, Manfredo Tafuri posed the problem of interpreting what we commonly refer to as modern architecture, concluding that the contemporary experience, embracing all of the twentieth-century architecture, can no longer be read in any linear form. On the contrary, it presents itself to us as a plural, multiform, complex experience in which it is legitimate to cut sectional trajectories that run not only from top to bottom, form beginning to end, but also transversely, obliquely, and diagonally. In some sense, it is only by way of approximations of this kind that the diverse, plural experience of twentieth-century architecture allows us to unstitch and unravel the intrinsic complexity of the modern experience itself.[3]**

The dichotomies (inside-outside, warm-cold, dry-wet, natural-artificial) in which architecture thrives are coming into question recently. Why do we have to pick a side? Why do things have to come to a final decision of choosing "a side?" These questions go at the heart of an important matter: the contemporary perception of reality as an experience that is not governed by absolute rules that are understood in a straightforward manner.

With the arrival of the "crisis" of modern thought and the end of the project that began in the Enlightenment came the distrust of the notion of absolute ideals that govern our knowledge and values.[4] The field of architecture reacted in various ways to this cultural "crisis": one called for a return to the essentials of the modern experience (Eisenmann, Graves, Gwathmey, Hedjuk, Meier in their New York Five period); another called to a return to a pure rational architecture inspired in the

[3] de Solà-Morales, "Weak Architecture", 616.
[4] Ibid.

traditional city (Rossi); yet another called for a return to the use of a classical precedent in typological and decorative terms to celebrate anomaly (Moore, Venturi).[5] All of these looked for a sense of security in dogmas that amount to nothing but nostalgic historicism. These responses are inappropriate to deal with a more complex reality.

The experience of multiple layers of time as a single event is an everyday experience that is more common that one thinks. A good example is how we can experience other planes of time with flashbacks or memories. This perception of time has been exploited in fields such as cinema and literature. One excellent example is the masterful use of time by Gabriel García Marquez in his celebrated novel One Hundred Years of Solitude. As the character is about to be executed by a firing squad, we enter into his mind and travel back in time to a series of events of the family saga. In the very first sentence we experience these simultaneous layers of time Colonel Buendía remembers "that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice."[6]

This perception of reality accepts seemingly confrontational conditions into a single event. Instead of being in one temporal plane this perception of time destroys the notion of "different instances". In terms of boundaries, this analogy would mean being in an event where there is no hierarchy of one side over the other. Creating a non-hierarchical relationship by destroying hierarchy has the positive outcome of considering "the other side" a part of our existence. When we disregard the other side, shun it from our lives, we accelerate a process of decay that makes "our side"

[5] Rafael Moneo. "The Thing Called Architecture" in Anything, ed. Cynthia C. Davidson, (New York: MIT Press, 2001), 121.
[6] Gabriel García Marquez. One Hundred Years of Solitude. (New York: Harper Collins, 2003).

more valuable on the expense of the other[7]. This logic has terrible consequences that are affecting the world at any given scale. Problems that range from closing neighborhoods with gates to keep "the element" out of our neighborhood, to the pollution of the earth to keep our urban environments safe are examples of the detrimental effects of conceiving the world as a hostile environment that we must be sheltered from. This is the danger that is created by "choosing sides".

Sharp Boundaries

The other approach to design is the clear definition of the sides to make the edge standout as another desirable instance. Instead of ambiguity, the strength of this approach is the clarity of purpose that different conditions possess. Clear sides create sharply defined boundaries. In this approach, both sides of the boundary are equally important. The question in this type of thinking becomes the definition of the limit and what type of relationship can be created with it. The definition of the problem deals with the scope and nature of the elements to be connected (or disconnected) while the solution to the problem deals with the character this limit is to have.

The understanding of the position we take on the case of a boundary, whether it is a side or the border itself, is determined by a number of variables. First, one has to consider the position "where" we are intervening. Second, one has to determine the "what": the nature and scale of the intervention. For the first set of variables, a suggested taxonomy by Josepa Bru in his book *Boundaries, Borders and Frontiers*

[7] A very cynical but sharp observation on the detrimental qualities of boundary can be found in Rem Koolhaas' project EXODUS: or the voluntary prisoners of architecture. By observing the Berlin Wall and its effects on the sides, Koolhaas proposes a new society within walls that slowly destroy the context around it.
Rem Koolhaas. Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large: Office of Metropolitan Architecture. (New York: Monacelli Press, 1995).

introduces 3 types of projects: water, nature and infrastructure. He also suggests categories for the "what": elements, architectures and landscapes. [8]

The "where" and the "what" of the problem intersect to define the strategy of intervention. For example, a dock for a small house by the sea has a boundary that is mediating water (where) with a singular element (what). If we increase the scale of the problem to a seaside water front, the place and the sides remain virtually the same but now the intervention can go into the realm of landscape or architectural strategies. Although the categories suggested by Josepa Bru can be expanded or revised, the method of intersecting the place with the strategy is helpful.

After defining the problem, then comes the question of what to do with the boundary. I see the following basic options:

1. **Emphasizing the boundary**: gives the limit a very strong character, independent of the parts that it is mediating and make it a protagonist. Example: a seaside park that stands between the sea and the city.
2. **Minimizing the boundary**: gives more importance to the sides that to the meeting of the sides. The intervention is minimal and is almost unperceivable. Example: a street that separates two districts.
3. **Probing the boundary**: introduces elements that act perpendicularly to the boundary to transgress it. Example: a bridge over a river connecting two sides.

This methodology can include some of the observations made about the contemporary perception of reality. I do not see a conflict with these two concepts, in

[8] **Balcells and Bru, Alongside.**

fact I see a mutually beneficial relationship. On the one hand, a clear definition of instances does not have to hierarchical. As long as we value both sides and the limit equally we can avoid some of the bad effects that are produced by "choosing a side" and discarding the other as an undesired condition. On the other hand, the simultaneous layers of time can co-exist in an environment that is pin-pointed by the method suggested by Josepa Bru. These two concepts are tied by one idea: valuing "the other side" just as much as the side we are "in". When both sides are "equal" the boundary becomes more successful as it catalyzes the synergy generated by the side it is defining.

Weak Architecture

> **In a world that incessantly consumes images, in a constantly expanding metropolitan culture, in a universe whose buildings are no more than a few of the infinite number of figurative and informative that surround us, there nonetheless exists the architectonic event. This event is like an extended chord, like an intensity at an energetic crux of streams of communication, a subjective apprehension offered by the architect in the joy of producing a polyphonic instant in the heart of the chaotic metropolis.**[9]

The context in which the Conservatory Annexation will be implemented is changing rapidly. This lack of certainty about the physical and cultural landscape is threatening at first but it can be embraced as a positive condition. The case for another understanding of this condition is championed by the late Ignasi de Solà-Morales. As explained in the preceding part of this chapter, our world and our perception of it are governed by simultaneity of different times. He advocates for

[9] ed. K. Michael Hays. Architecture Theory since 1968. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 614.

another conception of architecture that does not produce stable, monumental works of classicist and modernist dogma. Instead he proposes a notion that he calls "weak architecture".

His idea does away with some premises about architecture. First, "weak architecture" renders concerns with stability and permanence of architecture as irrelevant, as well as rejecting the permanence of a genius loci. Second, he rejects modernity's goal of linear progress and overcoming.[10] Third, he rejects the longing for security that the rules of classicism bring. Instead, "weak architecture" celebrates the simultaneous experience of different conditions in a fleeting moment that vibrates in our memory. That "extended chord", much like the final piano chord in "A Day in the Life" by the Beatles, is a powerful instant that extends into time, fading into a realm of reminiscence. The moment will live in our conscience, but the physical manifestation of the moment, the "event", lasts a fixed amount of time.

"Weak architecture" offers a singular moment that is configured by a "decorative" logic. His choice of the word "decorative" appeals to notions of unessential, complementary and transitory nature. Decoration makes our perception of reality discernible and bearable. Decoration is not to be understood as banal and vulgar. Architecture's role is decorative to the event.

The idea of transitory architecture that reacts to the times is seductive and ultimately useful if taken with some observations. I am a strong believer of the spirit of a place. I do believe in certainties and I find a sense of safety in buildings that are long-lasting. This safety relates to the notion of shelter, which is one of the primeval

[10] Ibid, 615.

roles of architecture. I believe that cities can have places where this transformation and dynamism are celebrated as well as places where we can rest from the stress produced by these areas. I find great value and appeal in both ways of living. Places of excitement and activity can celebrate the transitional while there can be places of urban peace and rest closely linked to housing and other activities that go well with this urban condition.

The context and the conservatory can be the notes of that "polyphonic instant". The additions that accommodate the growth of the institution will be new notes that will create new harmonics as they are inserted in the context.

The usefulness of the idea of "weak architecture" lies in the positive attitude taken towards transformation. Although the idea of transformation that is posed by Ignasi de Solà-Morales seems to rely on periods of time that last as long as a song, I think this logic of time can be expanded over longer periods of time. The "song" or the "extended chord" can last as long as a week, a year or a decade.

Can we create permanence with this transitory way of conceiving architecture? I believe this to be true. The rejection of "genius loci" by de Solà-Morales does not strengthen nor weaken the argument for "weak architecture". There are many ways to configure the same "spirit of place," much like music has infinite ways of being configured. I envision this transitory architecture as the configuration of different "moods" of the same spirit. These "moods" relate to the event that is to take place in the building and outside of it. This spirit would have a bigger, stable frame-work that allows for transformation to occur, depending on the type of performance, music and audience of an event. In the case of the Conservatory, the

events, the transitory moments are performances. Performance is thus the driving force for the temporary transformation place. The way the Conservatory annexation projects its purpose and events to the city can be part of that "decorative" logic mentioned previously that can transform a place with a sound or an image. A place can be transformed by an event.

Permanence lies in designating the Conservatory and its place as a "hot spot" of sound, vision and transitory experiences for the district, the city and the region. The more public areas of the program of the annexation should fulfill this role, being the mediator between the area for the learning of music and the city. This latter area should be sheltered a place where perfectionism and introspection motivate the students to achieve the noble feat of reaching the best of their interpretative abilities.

Music and the City

Music has two qualities that it shares with architecture. One is the aural environment that music and architecture are able to create.[11] In both disciplines one is within an experience, one governed by the ears and the other governed by the eyes and tact. The other quality is the factor of time in the appreciation of this aural environment. Music and Architecture are experienced in fixed amounts of time, yet hold the power of lasting a lifetime as memories which give both disciplines another layer of time and experience that can be exploited to the benefit of the composer and the architect.

Music is the reason this institution is a part of the organism of the city. Music is the medium of communication. Whether literal or phenomenological, the power of

[11] Radoslav Zuk, "A Music Lesson." Journal of Architectural Education, vol. 36, No. 3, Spring 1983.

music to stir the soul is the main trait that will pervade in the architectural configuration of the annexation of the conservatory. I am not interested in drawing parallels in music and architecture as disciplines that share a common language in composition, rhythm, scale, etc. I am interested in studying the effects and reactions produced by music and architecture and how to merge the two. I am interested in the elusive quality of "spirit" or "character" of program.

Before committing to an idea of how the conservatory annexation can use architecture as communication, I will explore alternatives of the means that can be used by the institution to communicate. They are divided in the following categories:

1. **Publicity**: television, radio, internet and printed media are ways the conservatory can communicate with the city. The buildings that make the conservatory will not actually communicate but be part of the image that is to be communicated with advertisement and other resources. This type of communication will highlight the events of the conservatory.
2. **Performance**: the role of the event is tantamount to the role of the environment in which this event takes place. Without performance, the place is dead with silence. The sounds of performance can leak out to the city in many ways: rehearsal sounds can enliven the street; recordings of performances can be sold to the public; televised transmission of concerts can be shown in the region. It is vital to project the event to the city in order to ensure the continuity of performance.
3. **Architectural Language**: the urban appearance, in addition to the architecture of the public areas of the annexation should communicate the

purpose of the institution. This purpose is unchanging. The events and character of the events that take place in the conservatory are transitory. The projection of these events and the permanent character of the mission of the institution should be the ultimate urban perception of this compound.

This thesis will not deal with the first two categories. The thesis is mainly concerned with the category of architectural language, but there must be awareness that architecture cannot carry the loads and responsibilities of the other categories.

The annexation of the conservatory needs to deal with the following issues:

- Produce an architectural language that is distinctive in the context of the city. This institution is unique and its architecture should be in accordance with this goal.
- Be flexible to produce different possibilities of performance. This flexibility and movement can be exploited in the "decorative" aspects of the buildings of the compound, wherever it is deemed fitting to express transitory conditions.

The temporal condition of music can be a rich source for architectural language, form and character. The notion of time in architecture as a source of inspiration of form has a long history of ideas. Most of them can be categorized into an idea of movement expressed in form or an idea of movement of the user moves through a building. On the first category we have examples in baroque architecture as well as contemporary cases such as the work of Frank Gehry. On the other category the theoretical writings of Bernard Tschumi introduce variables of

movement, event and time as parts of an equation in which building and the activity that is housed in the building create architecture.[12] Whereas the former generally leads to a passive engagement of the subject as it observes and gazes the object, the second involves an active involvement of the user in the experience of time and movement.

I will not dwell in this subject too long. For purposes of reference I will use the modes of architectural discussion of movement proposed by Greg Lynn in his text *Animate Form*[13]. In these categorizations, Greg Lynn identifies the ways time is perceived as they relate to the idea of motion and movement as a source of architectural form. He has identified the following ideas:

1. **Cartesian composition**: form is created in a timeless system of coordinates in idealized stasis. Time does not exist nor is incorporated into form.
2. **The Cinematic Model**: multiplication and sequencing of static snap-shots simulate movement. This is experienced in a linear fashion with a linear perception of time with a clear beginning and end.
3. **Indexical time**: multiple static frames of an object in time are superimposed in the same space simultaneously. Time is built into form as memory of an instance. The instances are footprints in a "temporal palimpsest."

[12] Bernard Tschumi. Architecture and Disjunction. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996).
[13] Greg Lynn. Animate Form. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999).

4. **Animate Form**: form is created in a dynamic field in which forces and pressures sculpt objects. Issues of time and movement are incorporated into the definition of this field of forces in which the object will be introduced.

Instead of choosing a universal dogma for the configuration of architectural form, I believe that the areas of the program can benefit from different sources of inspiration. The timelessness of Cartesian composition is pertinent in the area of academic and musical instruction. A neutral setting can be animated by the rehearsal of the student or the teaching of a class. A timeless setting can imbue a space with a spirit of serenity and introspection that are appropriate for the concentration and focus of a performer who is perfecting his/her craft. "Indexical time" shares some theoretical ground with the idea of "weak architecture" whereas the idea of animate form is to be explored as intangible forces such as sound can shape some areas of the building to accommodate an ideal response for acoustical purposes. The former category shows the transitory nature of the events taking place while the latter makes evident forces that are invisible but not less real. These two ways of creating form can create a language that is distinctive and unique in the context of Ibagué and be the source of inspiration for an architectural language that will stir the soul of the public and the students of the institution.

Conclusions

There are three governing principles that can be drawn form the previous theoretical analysis. First, city and nature as experienced in my site do not have to be adversaries. In order to create a condition of boundary on the edge of downtown Ibagué the topography and the vegetation should be valued just as much as urban condition. The definition of edge then becomes the definition of a synergic relationship of the downtown district and the place that it has always neglected. Second, change and transformation are to be harnessed and appreciated as phenomena that are symptomatic of economic growth. As the context changes, so will the conservatory and its addition will have to accommodate once again. Third, music is to play a communication role of the institution to the city. This is to be done by the public events held in the institution and its public space as well as using music as a source of inspiration of architectonic form.

The sum of these arguments points to a strategy of intervention that works in the urban and architectural scales: the addition to the conservatory is to consist of smaller part of a bigger whole. This way a big and ambitious program can change and adapt to the needs of a changing urban context. Each part obeys its own laws and its own language that fit its use and character. These parts are to be inserted in the context as parts of the larger organism that is the downtown district of Ibagué. Ultimately these parts become an important part of an urban intervention that will define an edge for the downtown district so it can relate to the cliff, the view and the river that the city has always ignored.

Chapter 2: Contextual Analysis

Regional Analysis

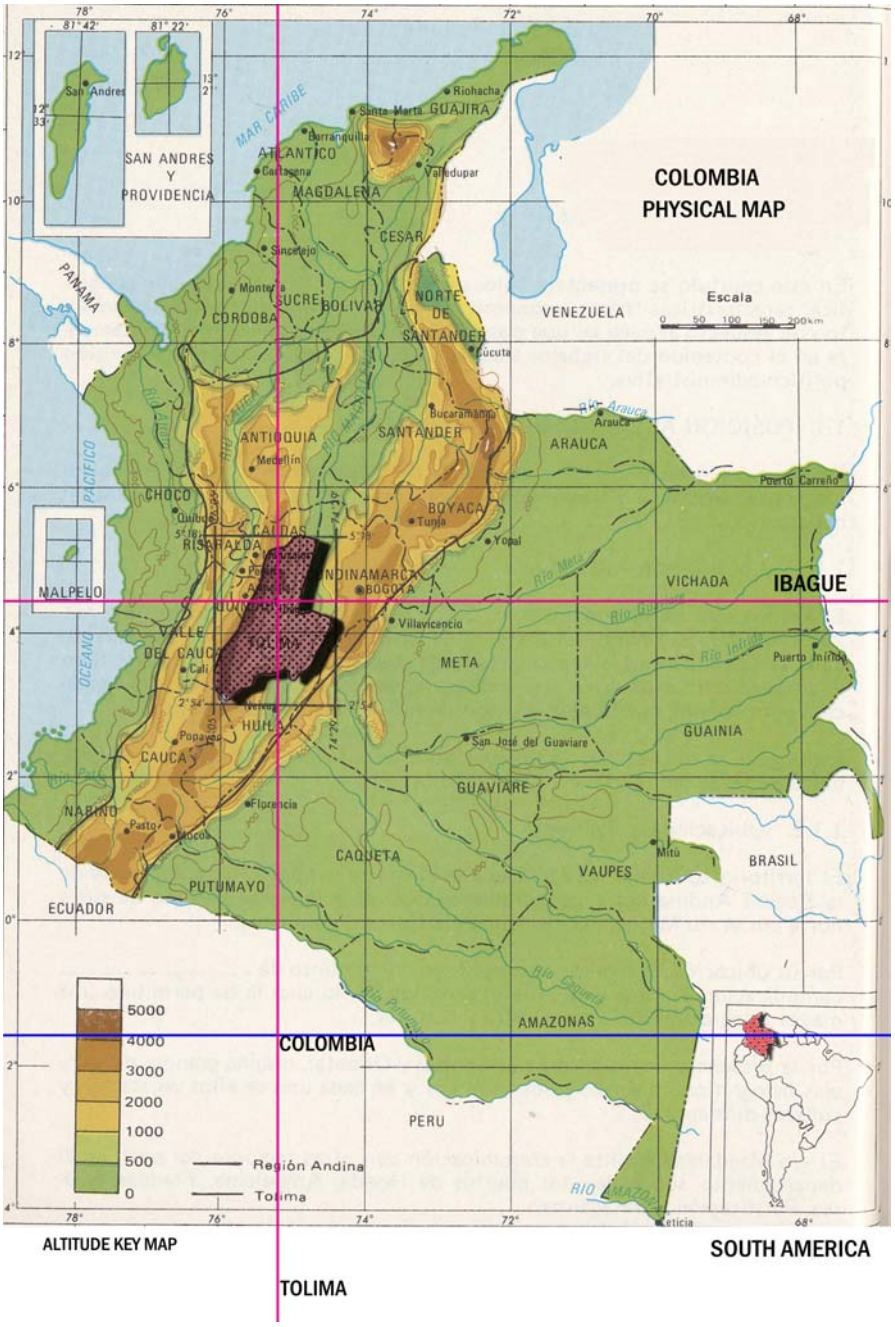


Figure 1. Physical map of Colombia Showing Tolima's relationship within Colombia. Source: Instituto Geográfico Agustin Codazzi (IGAC).

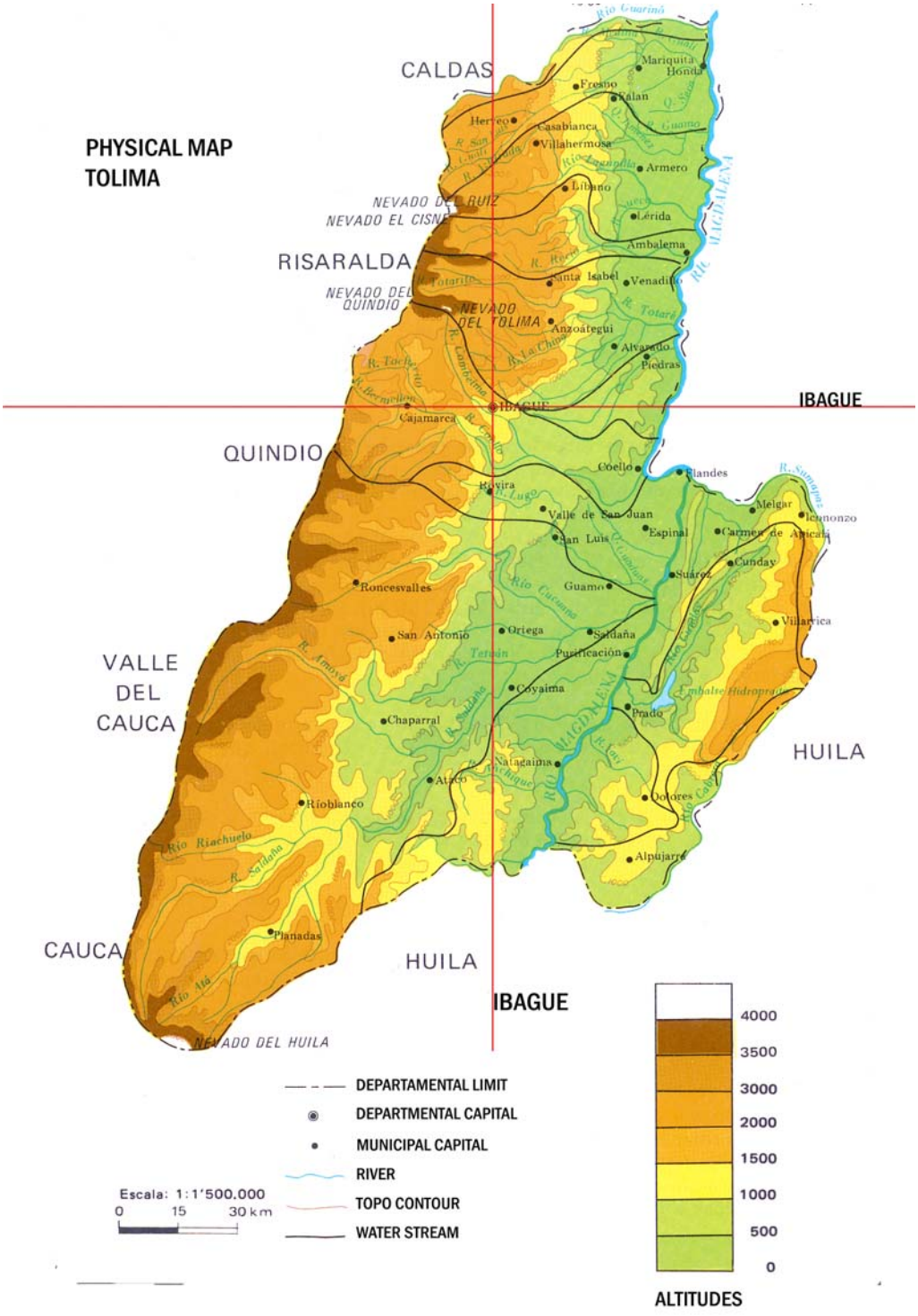


Figure 2 Physical map of the Department of Tolima showing the location of Ibagué. Source: IGAC.

Ibagué is the capital city of the Department of Tolima, Colombia. The department of Tolima is located the central Andean region of Colombia. Tolima is one of the departments that share the valley of the Magdalena River, the most historically important navigation route in Colombia. This valley is defined by the central and eastern branches of the Andes Mountains, which reach to heights of 5500 meters above sea level at its highest points. These points are volcanoes that are still active. The highest volcanoes have snow at their apexes.

Figure 3. Diagram showing Ibagué's central location between departmental capitals.

Ibagué's location is central in the department for easy access from both the south and north ends of the valley. Ibagué is located at the point in which the plain of the valley and central Andean mountains meet. Ibagué's centrality has been crucial to its success and growth in the last decades, but the economy of the department is much less important than the economies of Bogotá, Medellín and Cali. Thus the city and the region are humble if compared to other parts of the country.

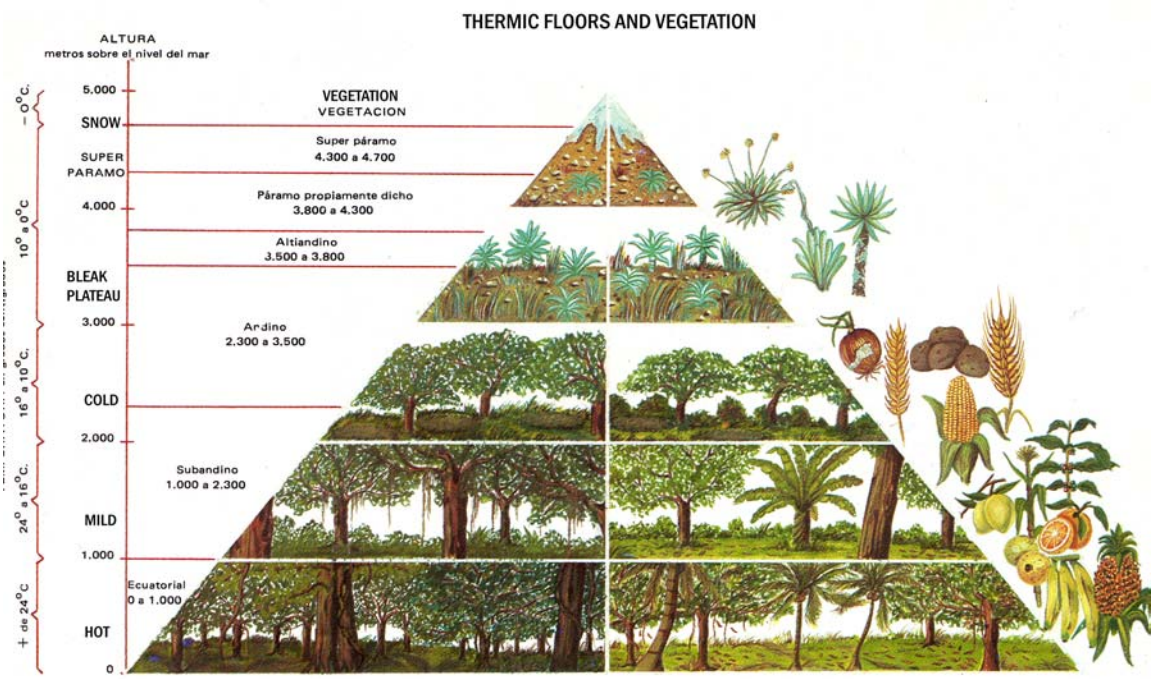


Figure 4. Section diagram of vegetation and thermal floors.

Source: IGAC.

The climate and vegetation of the region vary according to altitude and proximity to the valley of the Magdalena River. As Figure 3 illustrates, the lower part of the mountain has the hottest temperature and the densest vegetation. As shown if Figure. 3, as one climbs higher, vegetation changes and becomes less dense and the temperature drops.

The population of the Tolima in 2001 was of 1.300.944 inhabitants[14]. The percentage of urbanized population in Tolima was 62.6%, which is slightly lower than the national average which is 70%[15]. The main economic activities are large

[14] Banco de la República, Anuario Económico del Departamento del Tolima 2001 (Ibagué: Estudios Económicos, Sucursal Ibagué, 2002).
[15] Michael Pacione, Urban Geography: A Global Perspective. (New York Routledge:, 2001), 92.

scale industrialized agricultural and cattle located in the valley and coffee growing in the northern part of the central Andean mountain range.

Ibagué

Physical Attributes

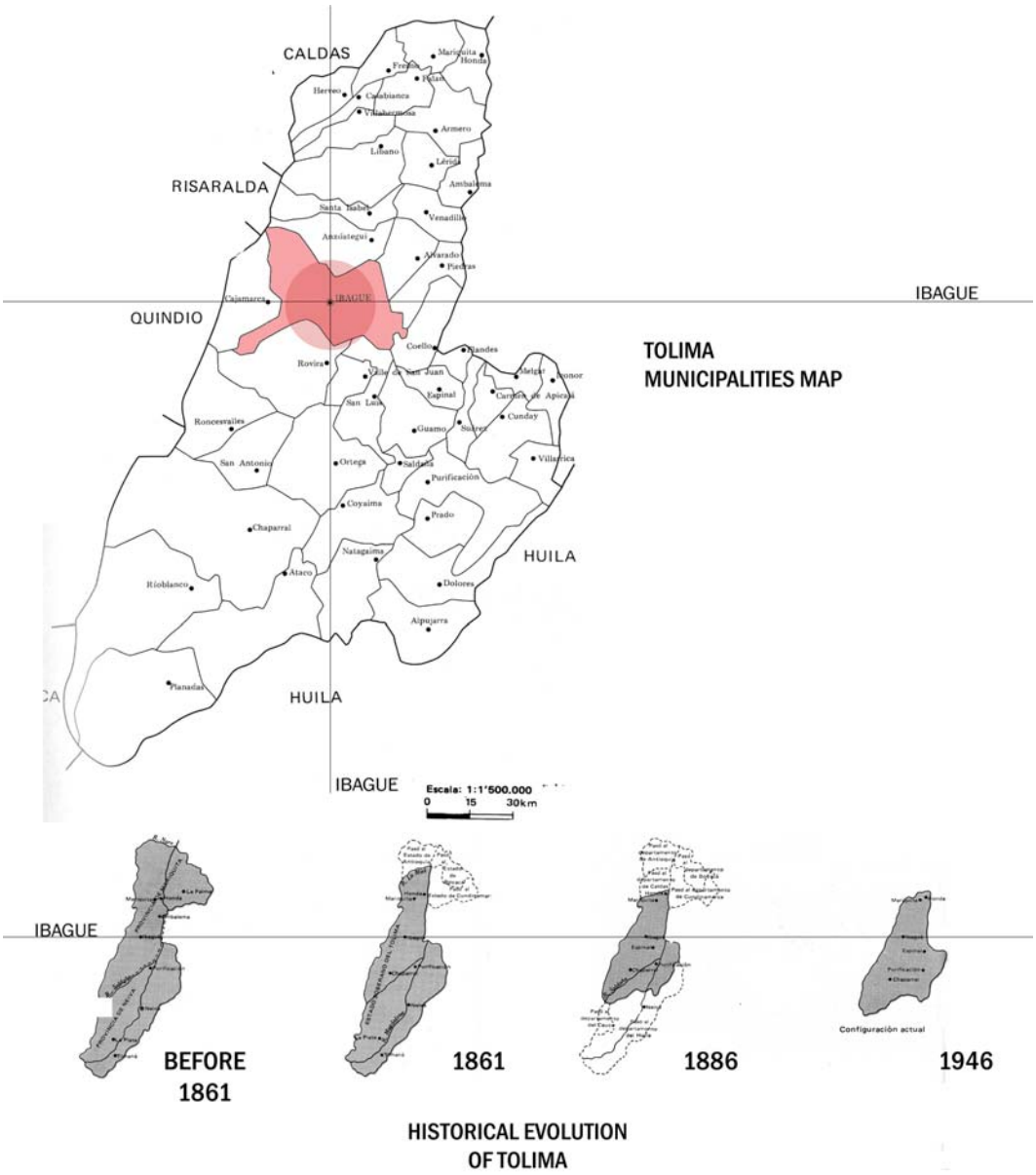


Figure 5. Historical Evolution of Tolima and Municipalities Map.
Source: IGAC.

The municipality of Ibagué had 430.400 inhabitants in 2001, constituting 33.1% of the total population of Tolima and 52.8% of the urbanized population of the department.[16] In lay terms, 1 out of 3 people in Tolima is from Ibagué and 1 of 2 Tolima urbanites lives in "The musical city of Colombia."[17]

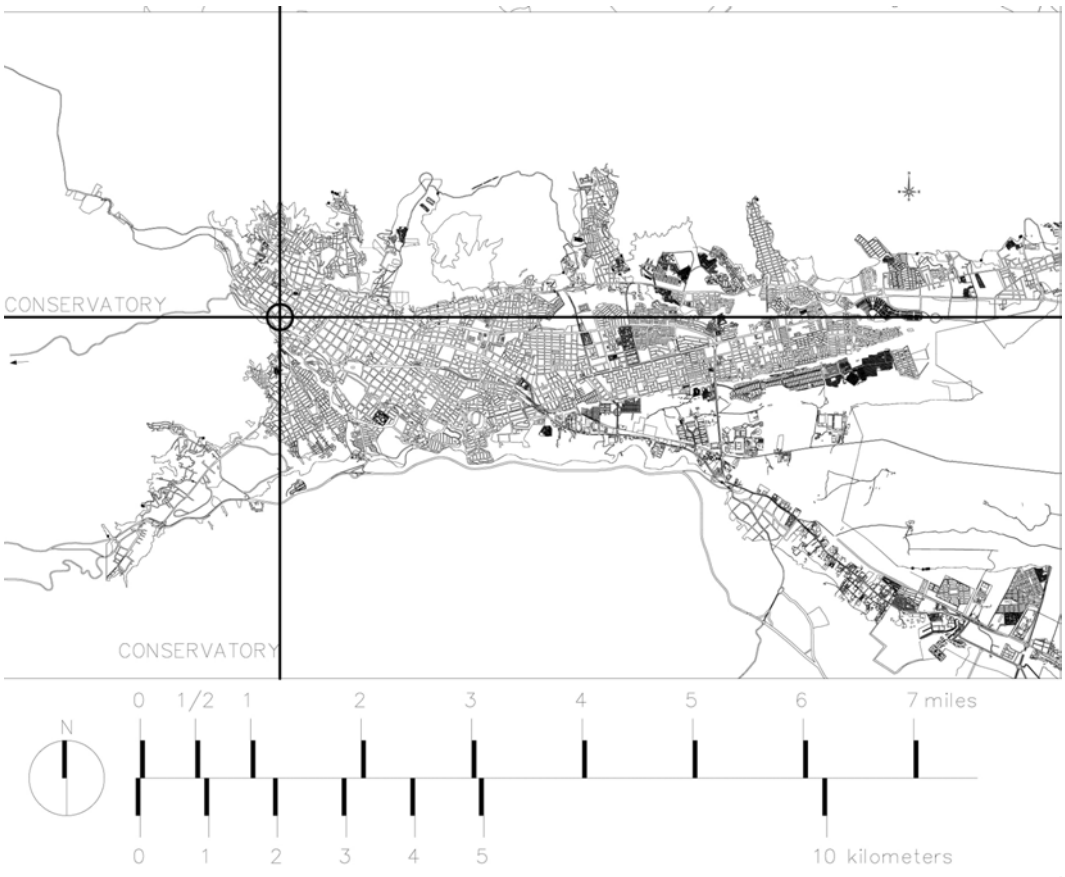


Figure 6. Maps of Ibagué's Street grid showing the conservatory's location.

The city of Ibagué is located at 1250 meters above sea level. The historical core Ibagué, commonly known as "Centro", sits on a plain that slopes with an average 7 percent grade. This plain is limited by the edges created by the Chipalo River to the

[16] Banco de la República, Anuario Económico del Departamento del Tolima 2001 (Ibagué: Estudios Económicos, Sucursal Ibagué, 2002).
[17] Ibagué is known in Colombia as "The Musical City of Colombia". This slogan is based on the tradition of interpreters of traditional and folkloric music from Colombia, many of whom studied in the Conservatory of Tolima.

north and the Combeima River to the South. The west is limited by the central branch of the Colombian Andes mountains while the east slopes down to a plain that is connected to the valley of the Magdalena River. The altitude allows for the city to enjoy an average temperature of 22º Celsius. Breezes that come from the canyon of the Combeima River cool the downtown district.

The Chipalo and Combeima rivers are located below the plain of the city. The erosive effects of water created big drops that have limited the city's growth. The north edge is not as dramatic as the one to the south, with 20 meter and 60 meter drops respectively. The combination of natural edges has sponsored a linear growth to the east.

Figure 7. View of Combeima River Canyon from the Instituto Bolivariano Building. Source: Photograph taken by the author.

Figure 8. View of Calle 10 looking north from Plaza de Bolivar.
Source: Photograph taken by the author.

As one stands in the center of the district one is completely unaware of the existence of these two water streams, yet they are vital for the sustenance of the city. Most of the potable water of the city comes from the Combeima River. The water is taken upstream where little human waste and eroded land contaminate it; but as the river leaves the city the sewage and the waste water are dumped so it carries the contaminated waters to the Coello River and ultimately to the Magdalena River.

This view of water streams as sewers is an inherited idea from European cities. All colonial cities in Colombia were founded near a water stream that provided a source of water upstream and a way to take away waste downstream. If

the source of water was not navigable, then the city and the blocks turned their backs to the water.

In terms of geometry this usually meant that the grid would by intersected by the water. Water did not sponsor any directions grid placement, nor sponsored frontage because of their function as sewer. The case of Ibagué is slightly different. Since the access to the water was not easy, water did not sponsor nor intersect the colonial city grid. The topography of the canyon of the Combeima River made it virtually impossible for colonists to reach water in this place, relying on a creek that was located to the west of the plateau. They channeled water to the public fountains where water would be collected in jars and taken home for consumption.

The relationship of the city with nature was initially antagonistic. The colonial city was made of austere streets and architecture that contrasted heavily with the jungle that surrounded the city. The jungle was a territory to be conquered, exploited and transformed into a useful land. The jungle, to the conquistador, was a place full of dangers and savagery. There is no wonder why there was little vegetation in streets and squares. Yet, the lots and backyards of the houses proved to be so extensive that they sponsored agriculture for domestic consumption.[18]

The relationship started to change slowly over the latter part of the 19th century. Based on the influences of the architecture of Bogotá, Ibagué's architecture started to open to the street with balconies and use a classical language for street frontage. Public space became the area to see and to be seen by people. Vegetation was incorporated in squares and some streets to make a more suitable environment

[18] Alcaldía Popular de Ibagué e Instituto Municipal de Cultura., Ibagué: Ayer, Hoy y Mañana (Ibagué, 1990).

for pedestrian use creating a cooling effect from the rays of the sun.[19]In the beginning of the 20th Century, the trees that today still stand on the plaza mayor, today known as Plaza de Bolivar, were planted for the enjoyment of future generations. The Centennial Park to the north was later created, taking advantage of topographical features and vegetation endemic to the area.

Historical Overview

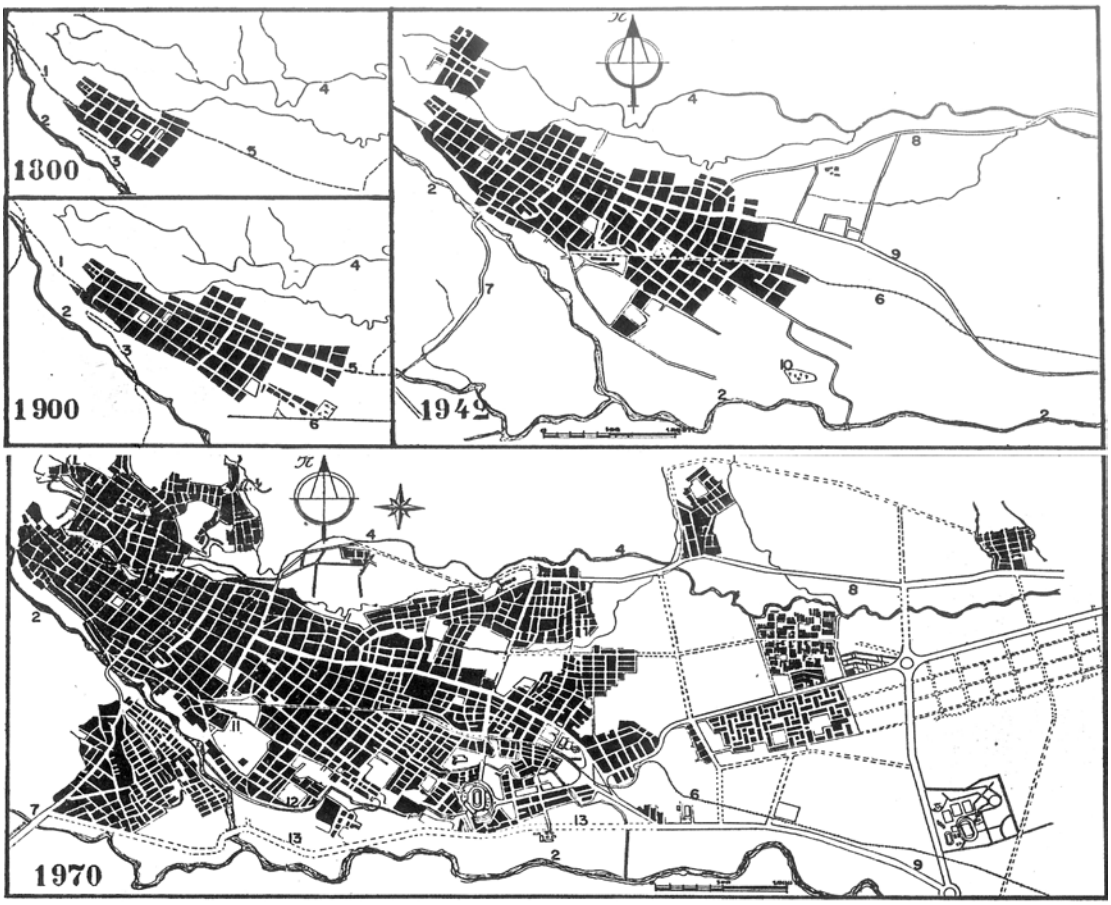


Figure 9. Diagrams showing incremental growth over the last 200 years.
Source: PROA, issue 210, 7-8

[19] Ibid.

Ibagué was initially founded in the 14th of October, 1550 but was relocated to its present location in the 7th of February, 1551. Ibagué's role in the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada was as an intermediate point for travelers and commerce between provinces. This secondary status accounted for its lack of prosperity. There was no significant urban growth for the better part of 300 years.

The city was organized around the main square (Plaza Mayor). The principal institutions and most important families lived around this square in buildings that contrasted with poor quality of the rest of the city. The buildings and housing faced unpaved streets and had unusually large back lots in which local farming was grazed. The best housing was located to the west of the Plaza Mayor. Today's "Carrera 3" was a commercial street at the heart of the city that connected the Plaza Mayor to the edge of town, where most trade occurred. Today's "Carrera 5" was an important trade route that ran east, but unlike the commercial street, it did not connect with Plaza Mayor. These trends of land use remain today.

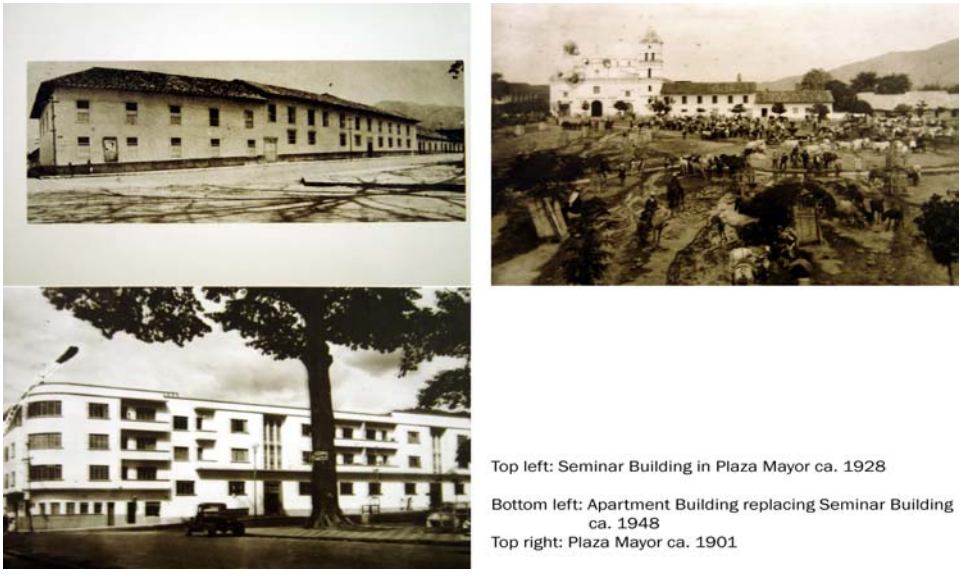


Figure 10. Historical photographs of Plaza de Bolívar (old Plaza Mayor).
Source: Darío Echandía Library, Banco de la República, Historical Archives. Ibagué, Colombia.

Ibagué is undergoing a process of urban transformation catalyzed by its elevation of status to capital of the Department of Tolima in 1886. All colonial architecture and urban spaces have been replaced with varying architectural languages, as if to erase the memory of its poor past. This phenomenon is accompanied by dramatic demographic growth that is expanding the city to the east and transforming the density of the foundational core.

Figure 11. Aerial photographs of downtown Ibagué 1955.
Source: IGAC.

Figure 12. View of Ibagué from downtown to the east plain.
Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

In recent years, the city has grown beyond the original plateau, sprawling east and colonizing the mountains with formal and informal development. The existing fabric is being replaced with buildings of 10-12 stories in height, trying to bring density into the downtown district. The rest of the city is developing with a combination of apartment buildings and housing of 2 stories on average.

While this transformation was taking place, the edge of downtown to the canyon of Combeima remained undervalued. The topography made the lots small and unattractive. The steep fall made access to the lower part very difficult so development of the area remained stagnant for a long period. This area remained virtually untouched, with wild vegetations growing behind houses that acted as a barrier between the city and the wilderness.

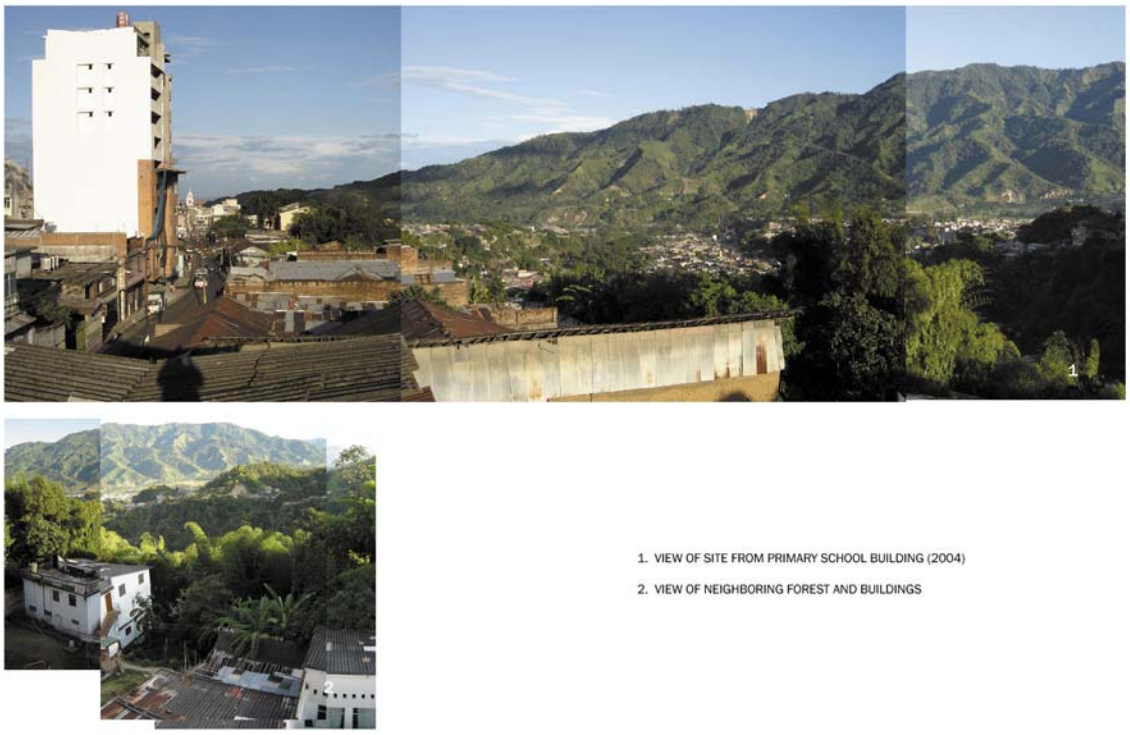


Figure 13. Views of neighboring buildings at the edge of downtown looking down the cliff.
Source: Composite photographs taken by the author.

Figure 14. Composite view of backs of Lots located at the edge of the cliff.
Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

This condition of wall created by architecture continued for the better part of the 20th century until the demolition of the houses purchased by the conservatory took place. All of a sudden the city had this big hole from which it could witness the magnificence of the canyon and the vegetation for the very first time.

Figure 15. View of neighboring landscape from the Instituto Bolivariano Building.
Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

This area, which remains undervalued, has been colonized by hoodlums and people of scarce resources creating a loose informal settlement. Most locate near the river to draw water. This area has been a magnet for this type of colonization because it seems as if no one has claimed property rights over it.[20] Today the area is a neglected piece of land with potential for development of a park or a forest that could be a great metropolitan resource with ecological and recreational benefits.

[20]Informal settlements have similar patters throughout the world. Observations on the nature informal settlement and land ownership can be found in: Howard Davis, The Culture of Building (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37-42.

Vegetation

Figure 16. Native Vegetation over a channeled water stream.

Source: Photograph taken by the author.

The vegetation of the area is determined by its altitude and location in the mountain. The vegetation is characterized as "Sub-Andean", a type of vegetative formation endemic to the area where the altitude is between 1000 and 2300 meters above sea level. The characteristics of this type of vegetation formation are its trees that reach heights 30 meters in full maturity, closely planted together. The leaves are of medium size, allowing the passage of light and the growth of bigger plants near the soil. Plants also grow on the trees, many of them are parasitic.[21] Trees and shrubs

[21] Ministerio de Hacienda y Crédito Público, Instituto Geográfico Agustin Codazzi. Tolima Aspectos Geográficos (Bogotá: Instituto Geográfico Agustin Codazzi, 1984), 43-44.

grow at amazing speeds, since the climatic conditions are invariable, with constant rain and sunlight all throughout the year.

Figure 17. Canopy tree in Carrera 5 median in Calle 40.
Source: Photograph taken by the author.

These trees produce less shade than trees that grow on lower altitudes. Species from the valley of the Magdalena river, that have canopy shapes, are used in the urban landscape to provide shade on main streets, squares and avenues.

Centro District

Physical Attributes

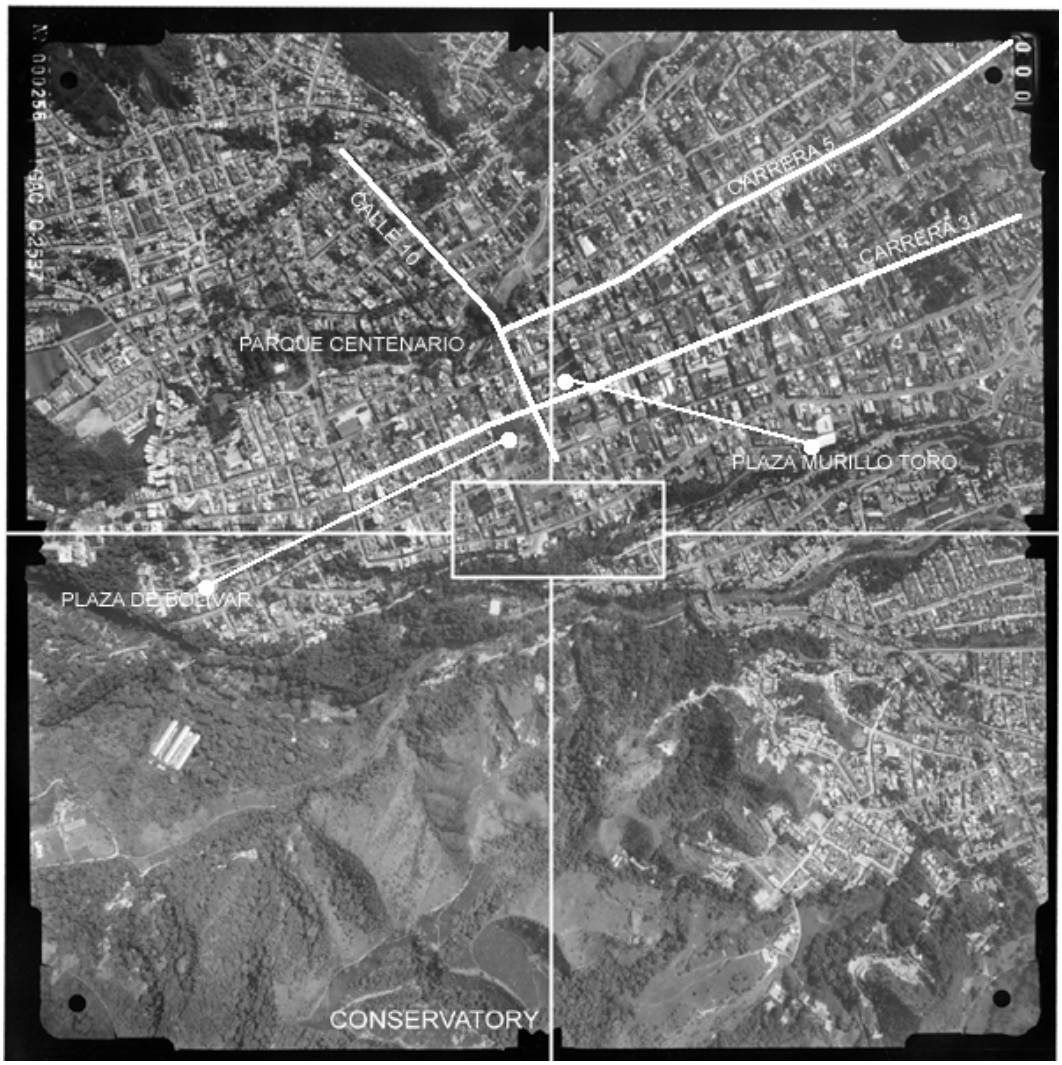


Figure 18. Aerial Photograph of Downtown Ibagué, 2000.
Source: IGAC.

The Centro district follows a grid street system with blocks of about 330 feet (100 meters) with a central Plaza Mayor around which the most important civic buildings are located. The streets, of about 10 meters wide and varying profile, are categorized in "Calles" and "Carreras"; the former running in the North-South direction and the latter running in the East-West direction.

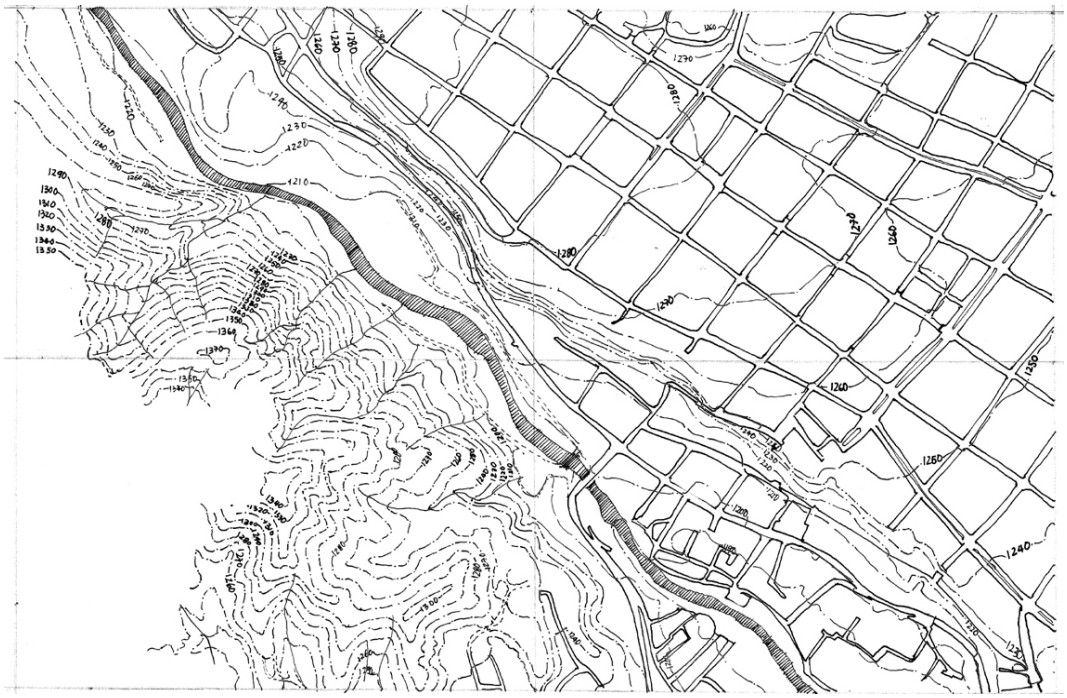


Figure 19. Diagram showing street grid, topography and Combeima River.

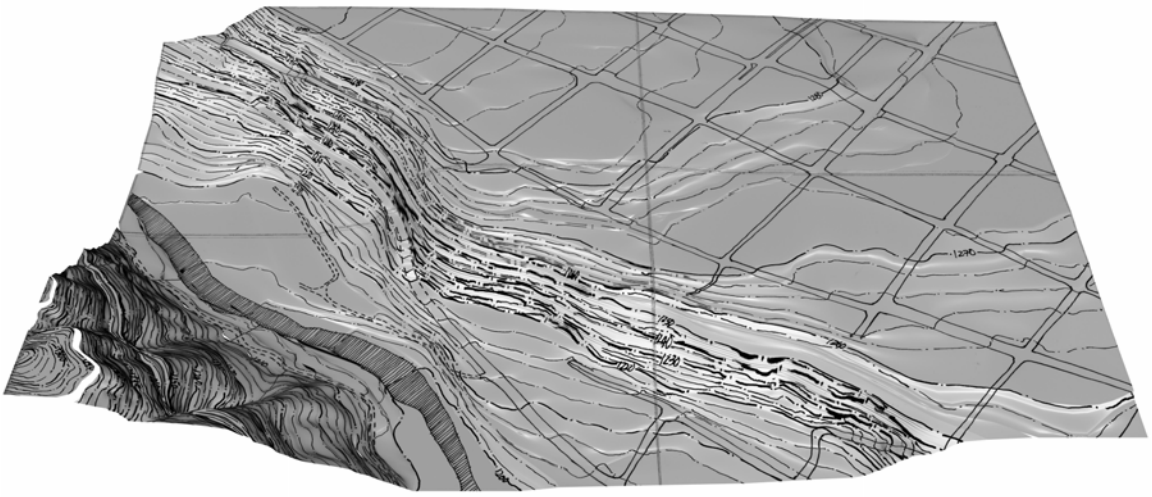


Figure 20. Digital Model showing the relationship of grid and topography.

The meeting of the city grid and the edges is awkward. When meeting the mountain the grid warps and distorts; when it hits the southern edge, the blocks are fragmented, fronting the street but giving their back to the river. The river is non-existent to the pedestrian in downtown.

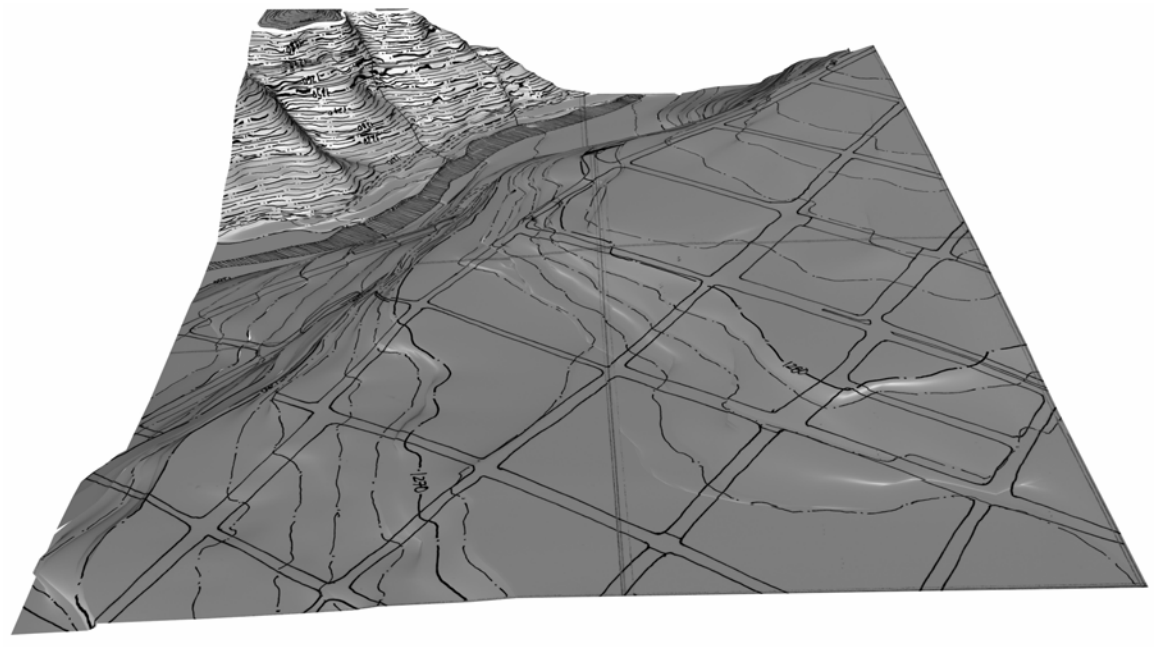


Figure 21. Digital Model of street grid and topography.

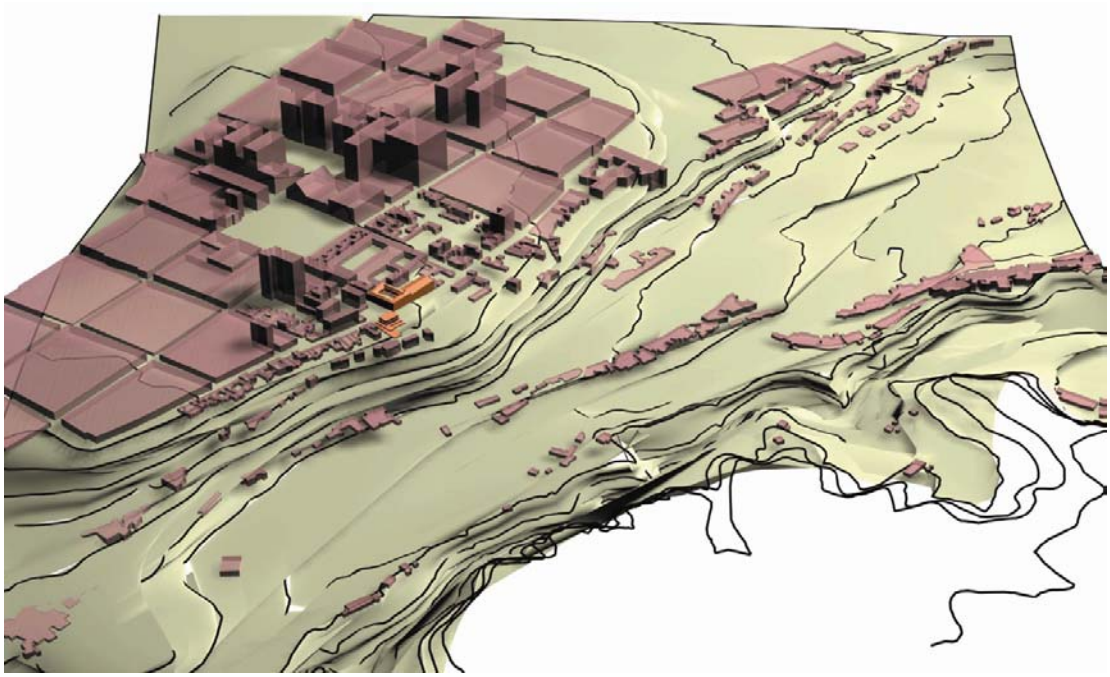


Figure 22. Digital Model of Street Grid, Topography and Massing of Downtown district.

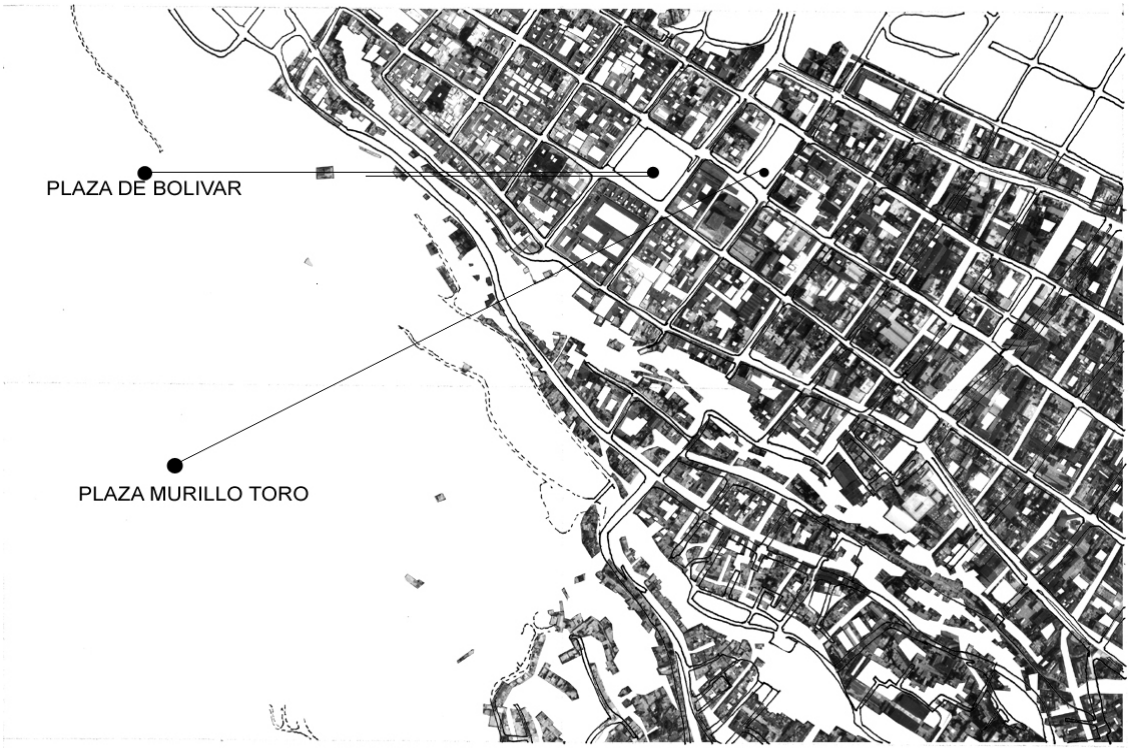


Figure 23. Diagram combining street grid and Aerial Photograph.

Figure 24. Composite photograph of Plaza de Bolivar looking from north looking south.

Source: Composite Photograph taken by the author.

Figure 25. Composite photograph of Plaza Murillo Toro from the east view looking west.

Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

Land Use Patterns

The land use is located in districts that share important streets as connectors and transitions between them. The districts are connected like pieces of meat in a skewer by "Carreras", with the commercial street (Carrera 3) for main pedestrian connections and the main avenue (Carrera 5) to connect downtown with the rest of the city. "Calles", the streets that run north-south, are shorter and function as secondary streets. Some "Calles" act as permeable edges of districts that are about 20 blocks in size. Along "Carrera 1" there are some important amenities. On "Calle 11" there is a Hospital. On "Calle 14" there is a busy market. Further down on "Calle 19" there is a bus terminal.

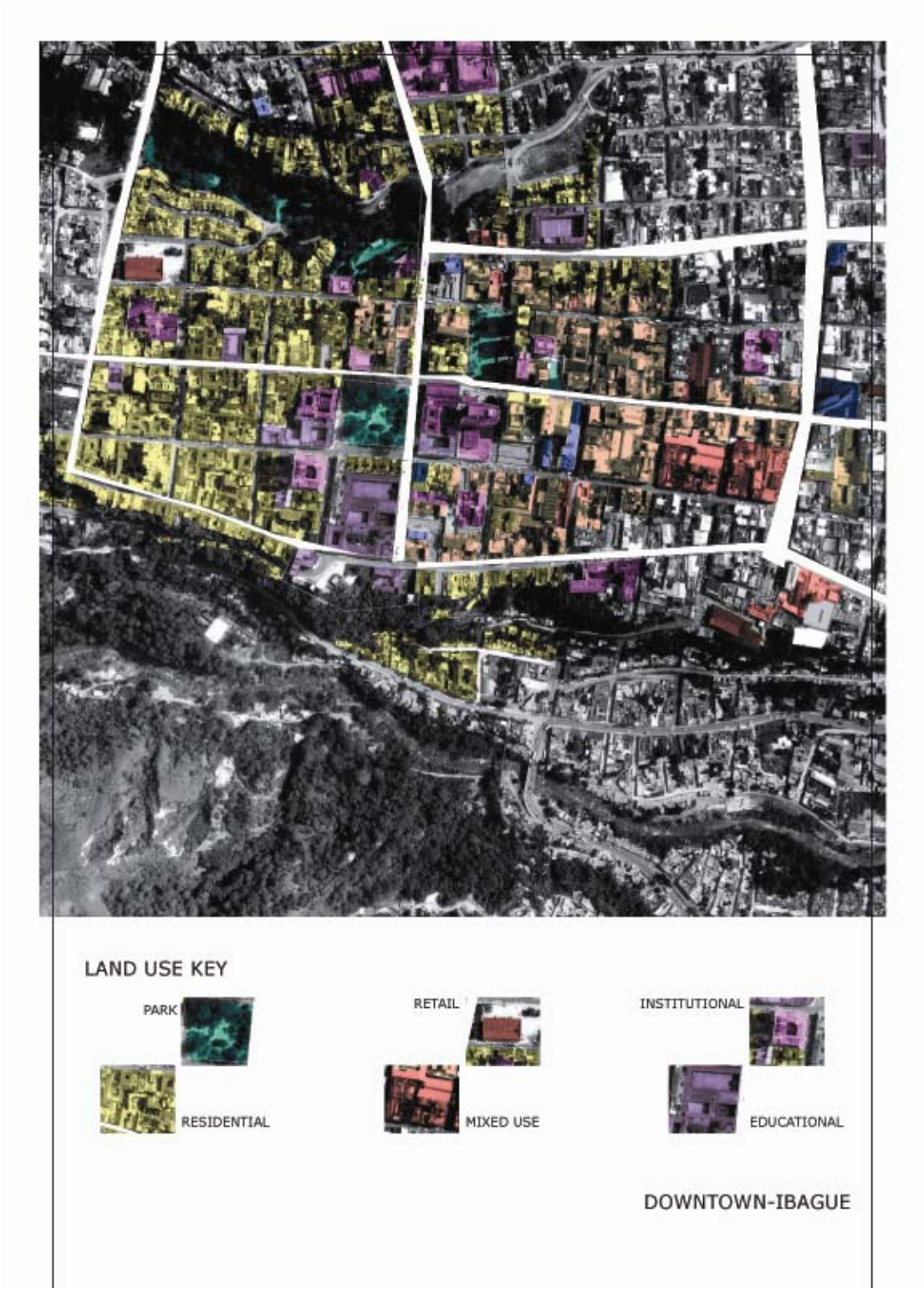


Figure 26. Land use analysis of downtown Ibagué.

Site

Physical Attributes

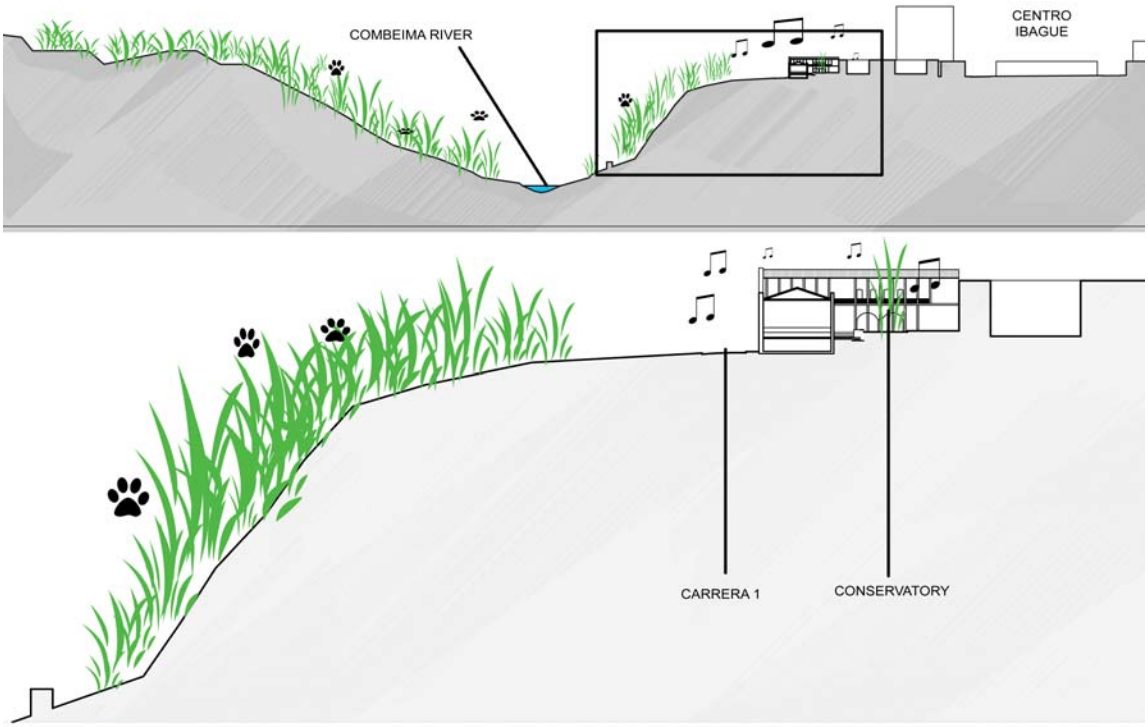


Figure 27. Section of the Combeima River Canyon through the site.

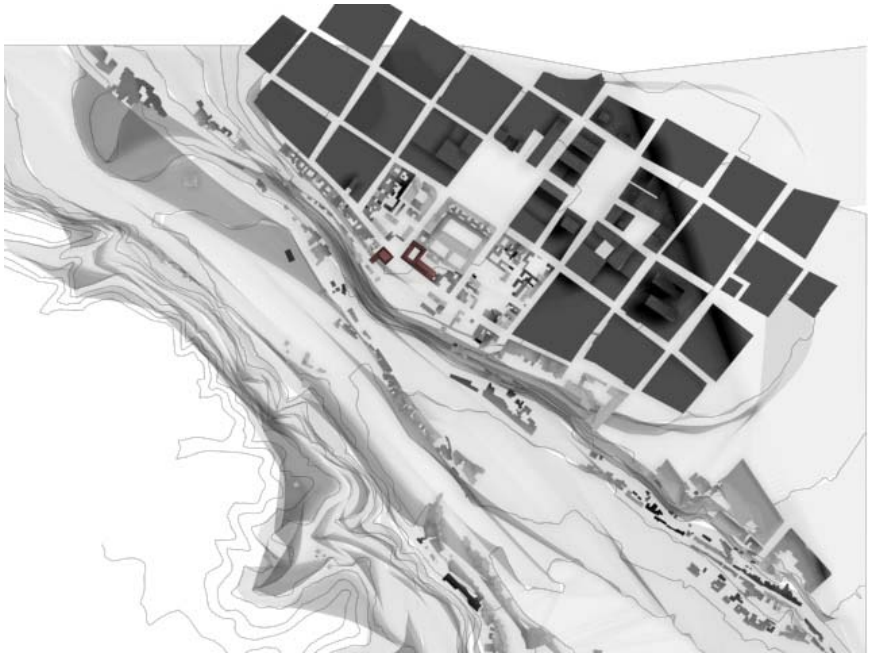


Figure 28. View of Digital Model from above.

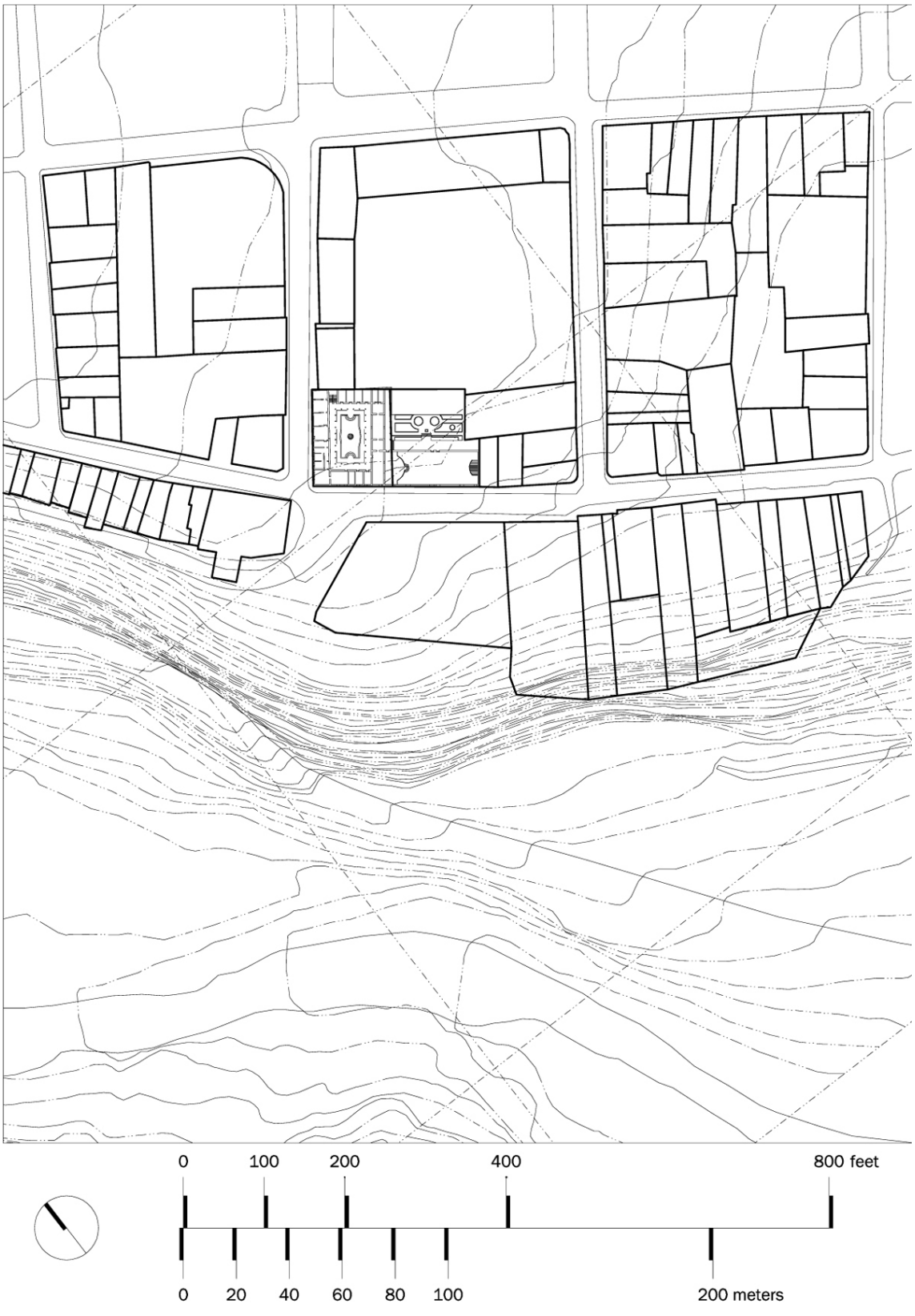


Figure 29. Plan Showing Original Conservatory complex with adjacent lots.

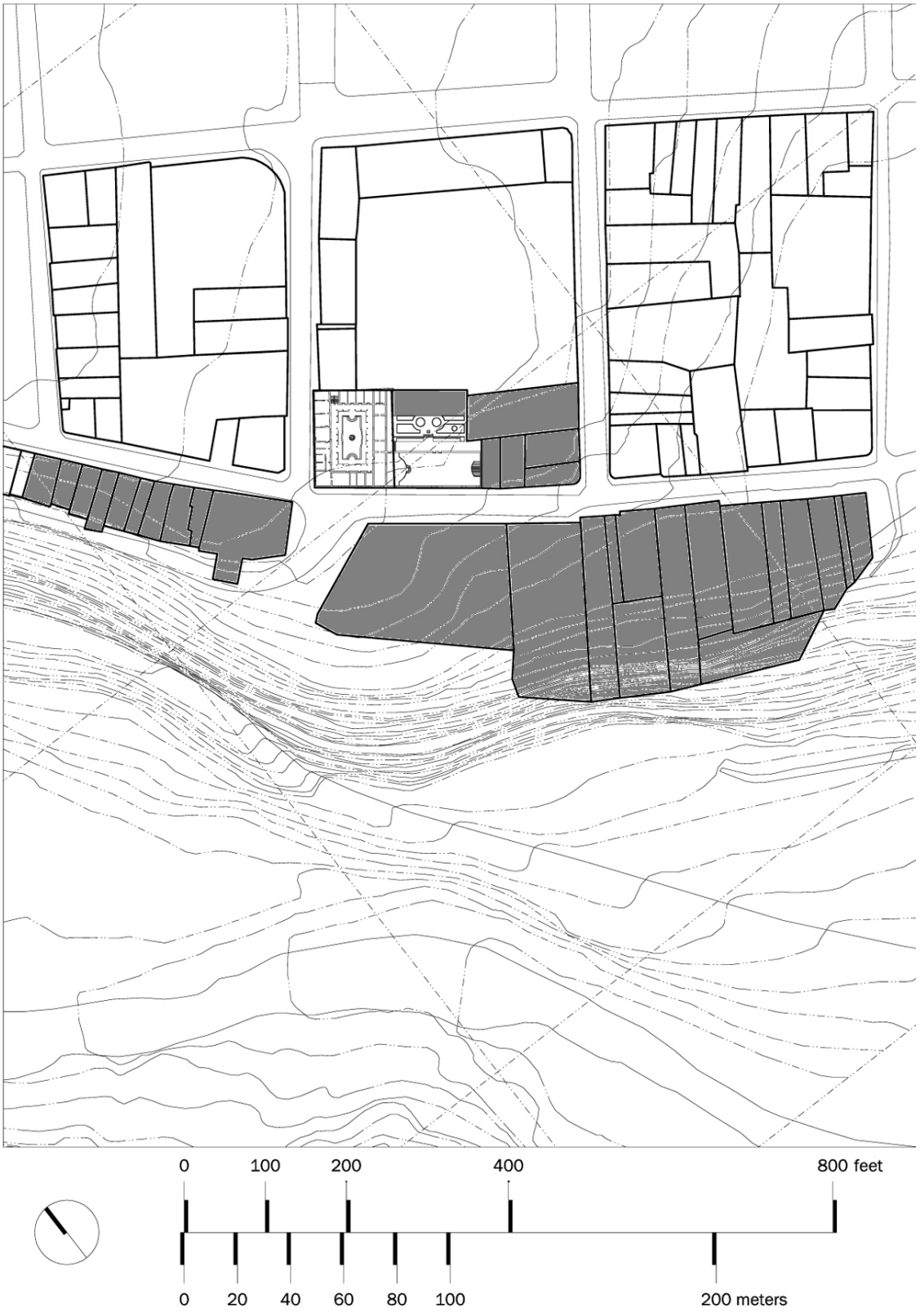


Figure 30. Plan showing adjacent property need for the execution of Conservatory expansion.

Figure 31. Plan showing adjacent lots that are currently vacant.

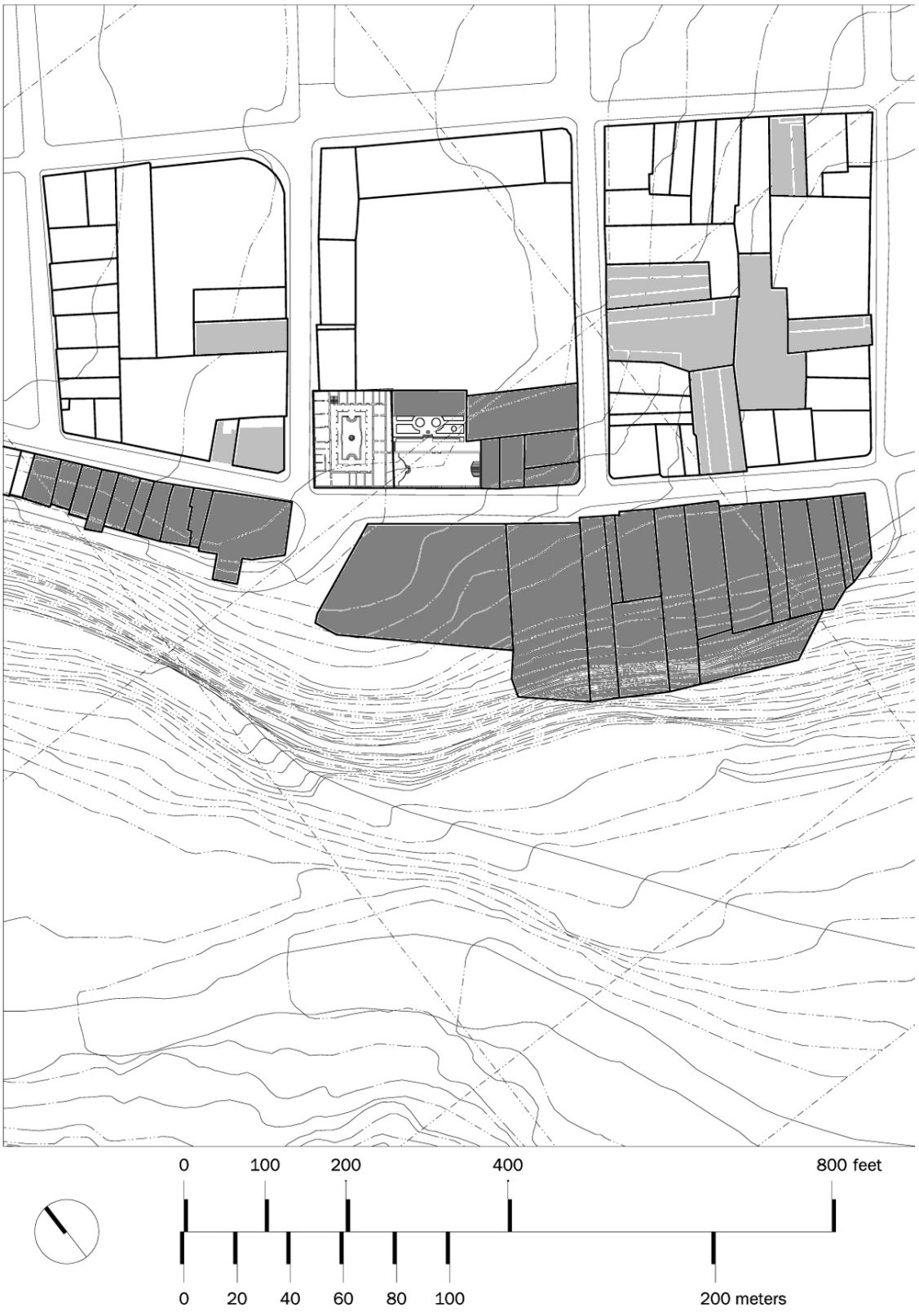


Figure 32. Plan showing the total available area for intervention.

The place where the conservatory is presently located is on the southern part of the block defined by “Calle 9” and “Calle 10” and “Carrera 1” and “Carrera 2”. The Conservatory owns the lots that go from “Calle 11” to “Calle 8” and flank “Carrera 1” to the south. The lots adjacent to and in front of the existing Conservatory have a combined area of approximately 1.75 ha (4.32 acres). They are represented in red in the following diagram. This area has a gentle slope of approximately 7% down to the east. The area, in addition with the existing buildings in the conservatory, is what I will refer to as “the site.”

Figure 33. Hard Boundaries vs. Soft Boundaries of the site.
Yellow represents the hard boundaries of the site. Red represents the areas where the project can grow.

The site is sliced by the “Calles” and “Carreras” mentioned earlier, especially by “Carrera 1”. This street runs parallel to the Combeima River below and separates the present conservatory from the lots mentioned above. The “Calles” either stop at

"Carrera 1" or warp to continue down into the valley. The continuation of "Calle 9" is especially important since this street is another dissector, which divides the northern part of the site and shortens the depth of the lots located in this area.

The buildings that remain in the lots face the street while not addressing the open landscape to the back. Most of these buildings are houses of 1 to 2 stories of little architectural value that are principally located to the north. Most vacant lots are in the south part of the site. Some of the vacant lots are used as parking lots and occupied by temporary structures called "enramadas", which are made of wood and tin metal roofing to protect the cars from the sun and rain. The lots remain vacant as the owners wait for the value to increase to be sold for later development.

The backs of these lots are located right at the beginning of the steepest part of the cliff. This area in between the lots above and below the drop to the river is a "no-man's land", where settlement has been informal and sporadic. This area is full of thick vegetation that is endemic of the mountains and climate of this area.

Conservatory

Historical Overview

Figure 34. Students standing in front of the Conservatory. ca. 1930's.
Source: Darío Echandía Library, Banco de la República, Historical Archives. Ibagué, Colombia.

The conservatory has evolved along with the city's growth and transition into a more urban society. The initial institution, a music academy, had no permanent place to practice. This academy eventually settled in a Normal School for Boys near the original Plaza Mayor, today's Plaza de Bolivar. The exact date of construction of this building is hard to pin-point, but its style and construction technology locate it in a period of time that goes from the end of the 19th century to the early 20th century[22]. In 1934 the Alberto Castilla Music Hall was attached to the first building. The building is named after the founder of the institution. This structure, which houses around 350 people, was built adjacent to the old school and they are connected by a courtyard. This music hall in conjunction with the first building is a national patrimonial monument[23]

[22] Alcaldía Popular de Ibagué e Instituto Municipal de Cultura, Ibagué: Ayer, Hoy y Mañana, (Ibagué 1990).
[23] Ibid.

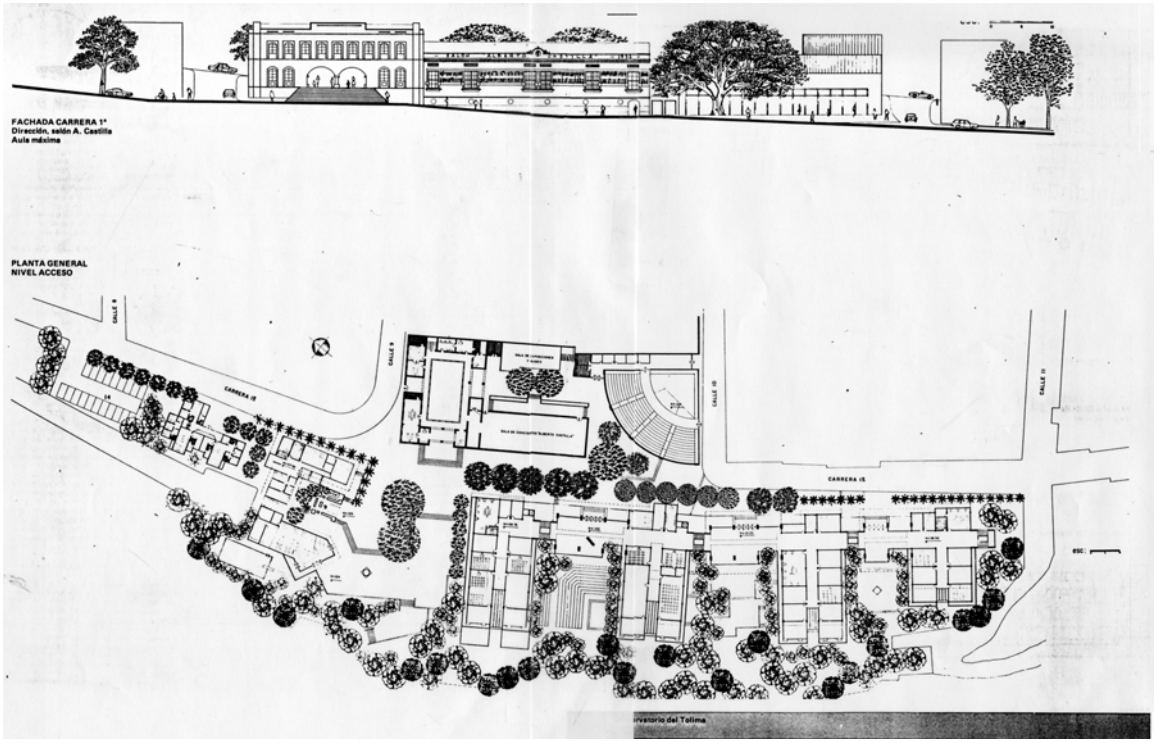


Figure 35. Plan and Elevation of winning competition entry.

Source: Sociedad Colombiana de Arquitectos, 10 Anuario de la Arquitectura Colombiana.

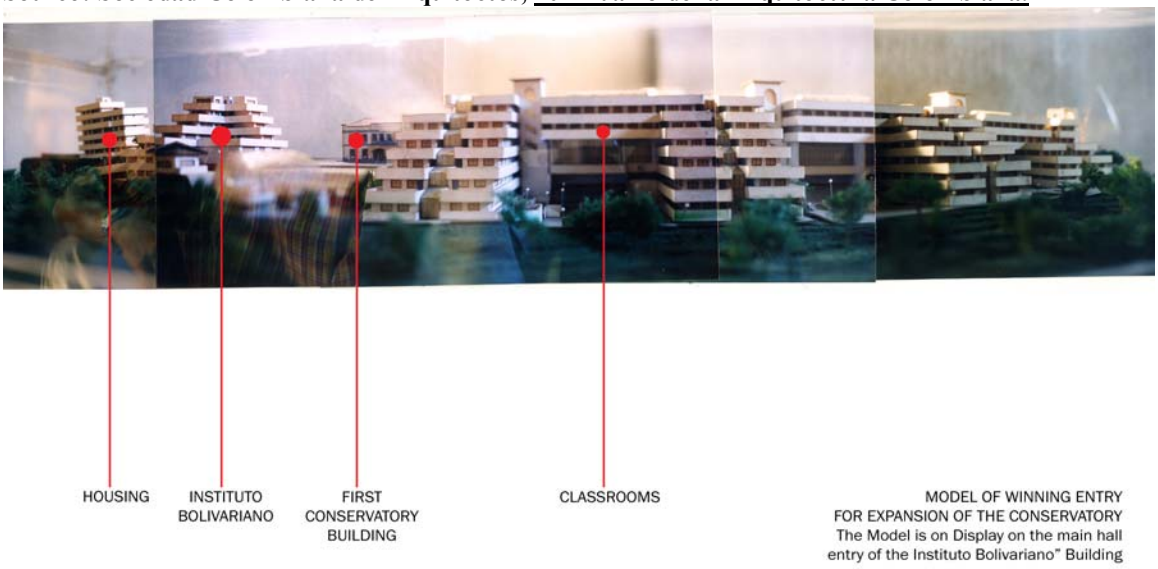


Figure 36. Model of Architectural project for expansion of the Conservatory.

Source: photograph taken by the author.

In 1981 an architectural competition was held for the design of the Conservatory with a bold and ambitious program that included a High School for

music, a School of Education and Arts, housing for visiting professors and other amenities.[24] Only one building of the winning entry was constructed with funds provided by the Organization of American States (Instituto Bolivariano). The lots and houses that were purchased for the project remain vacant and underused. As illustrated in Figure 26, today's conservatory is a cumulative compound of buildings from different eras with varying degrees of success integration to the context and architectural quality inserted in a dilapidated context.

[24] Sociedad Colombiana de Arquitectos, 10 Anuario de la Arquitectura en Colombia, (Bogotá: Carlos Valencia Ediciones, 1981).

Exiting Complex

Figure 37. Composite Photograph of the conservatory looking to the Instituto Bolivariano.
Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

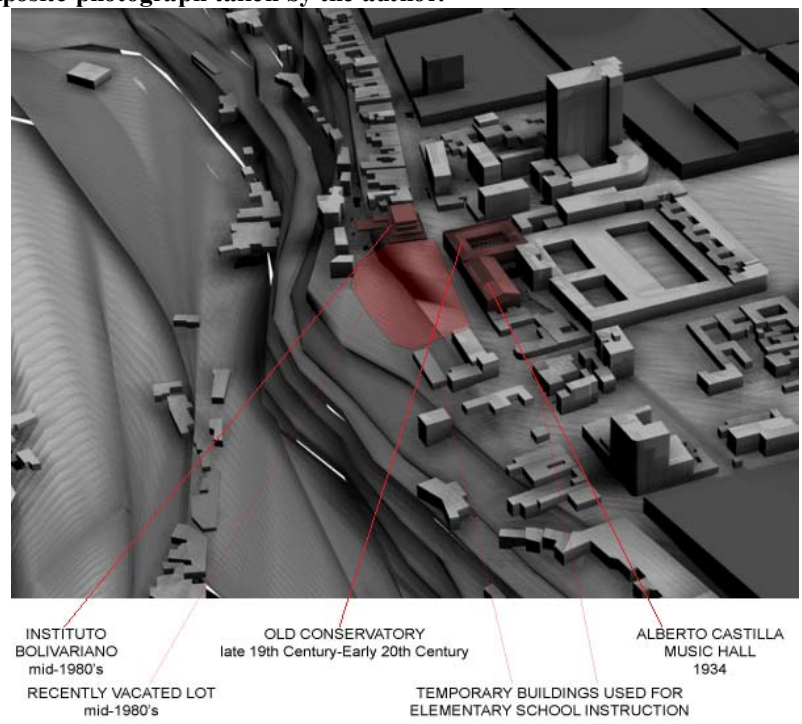


Figure 38. Digital Model Showing Existing Conservatory Buildings and context

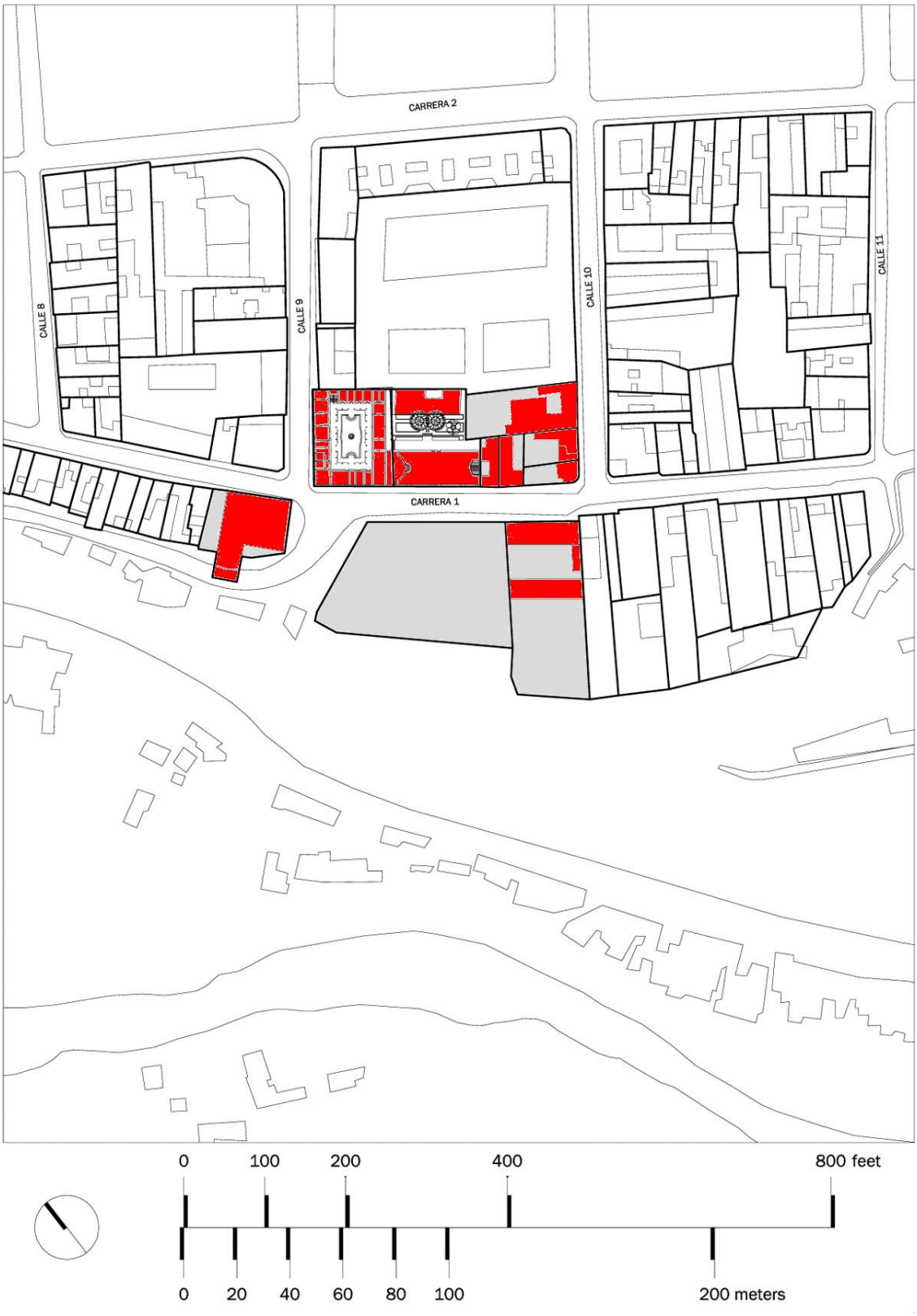


Figure 39. Existing Conservatory complex.

Existing Patrimonial Buildings

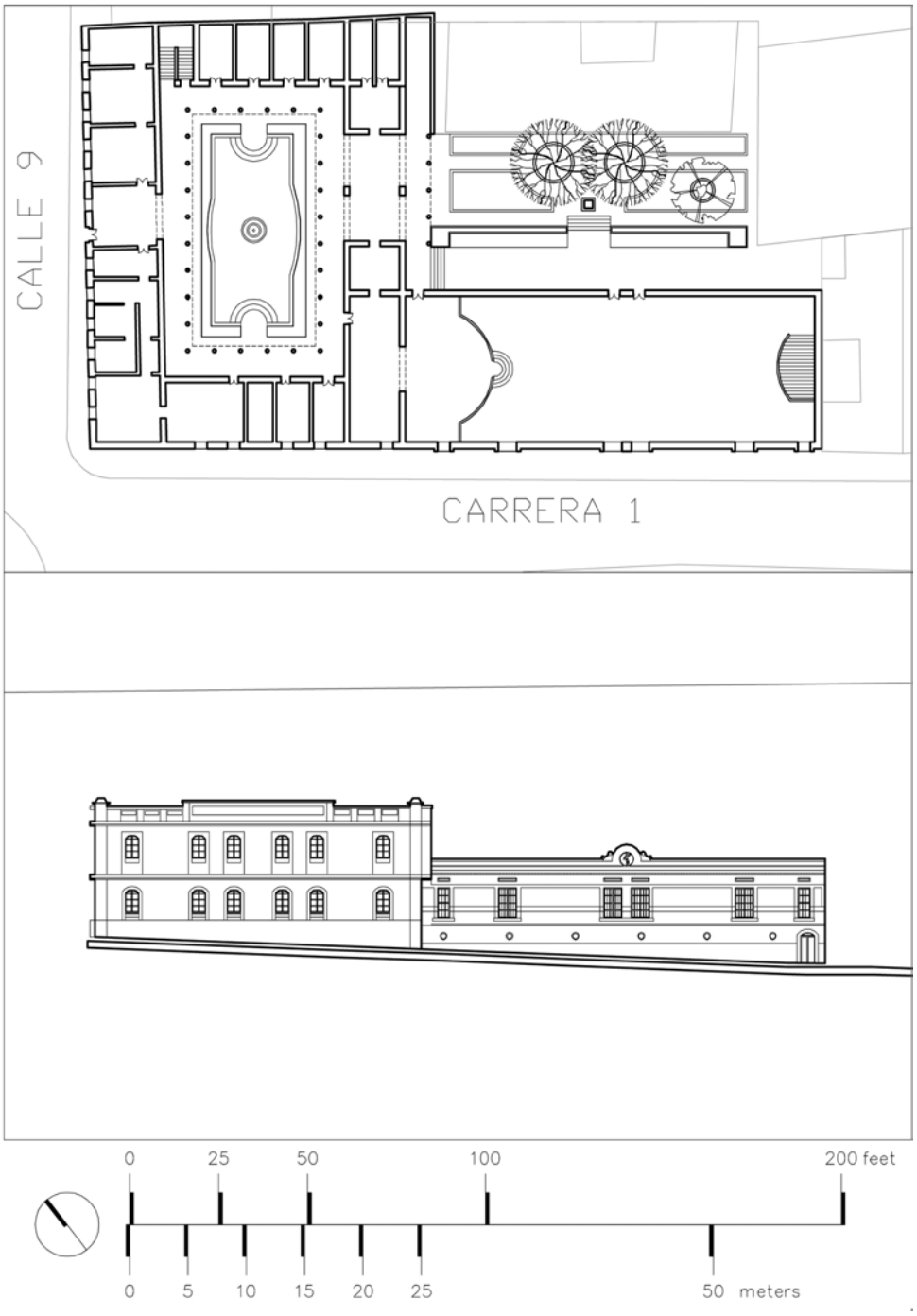


Figure 40. Old conservatory and Alberto Castilla Music Hall: plan and elevation from Cra. 1.

Figure 41. View from the first floor of courtyard of Old conservatory.

Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

Figure 42. View from the second floor of courtyard of Old Conservatory.

Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

Figure 43. View from the first floor of courtyard adjacent to Alberto Castilla Music Hall. Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

Figure 44. View from the second floor of courtyard adjacent to Alberto Castilla Music Hall. Source: Composite photograph taken by the author.

Conclusions

The site presents the following opportunities and issues to address:

1. The site is located at a place where a drastic change of condition exists: on the one hand there is an urban fabric that is located on a flat plain; on the other hand there is a valley below the plain. The city has not taken advantage of the opportunities given by this condition of edge, partly because this place has not been defined as an edge in the first place.
2. The neglecting of the steeper area of the site, that "no-man's land", is a blessing to be exploited. To exploit it, the intervention has to address the awkward adaptation of the city grid to the topography and the ambiguity of ownership of land this has created in the site.
3. The site is sliced by a series of streets that separate the different areas for built intervention. This presents a conflict between the integration of pedestrian use of the buildings that are part of the intervention and the vehicular traffic that is vital to the Centro district. Also to bear in mind in terms of pedestrian connections is the slope to the east, which will create conditions of uneven access and levels of pedestrian use throughout the site.

Chapter 3: Program

Methodology: (Arriving at the Program)

In this chapter I will define the areas of the building program of the Conservatory. In order to do this, I will define the institution and its scope. Then, I will compare the areas and proportions of program of two precedents, namely the master plan of the 1981 winning competition entry and the Julliard School in New York. Finally, I will test the program with basic planning areas extracted from the book Architects' Data by Ernst and Peter Neufert[25]. The results of these probes will produce the final program tabulation.

I want to combine Julliard's program configuration and proportions with the total area given by the total area of the conservatory. This combination of information will take place mainly at the university level, leaving the high school and elementary school tabulation that will be determined by the total number of pupils and the suggested areas given by calculating areas from Neufert.

Definition of the Conservatory

A common definition for conservatory is of an institution dedicated to the teaching of music performance and composition. Many institutions use the name to denote their focus on the study of music, yet this does not constrain age group or a methodology of teaching. In general, conservatories offer their pupils an education in which to perfect their craft as musicians and their skill as composers.

[25] Ernst and Peter Neufert. Architects' Data, (Oxford: Blackwell Science, 2000)

There are cases of conservatories that include other performing arts such as dance and theater in their curriculum (Julliard School). Thus the definition of conservatory expands to a school devoted to the performing arts. Today, some conservatories have expanded their curriculum to include humanities as part of the education of the pupil (Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore).

The conservatory of Tolima is an institution that offers education in music and dance to students that range from kindergarten to university level. Instruction is both formal and informal, with free courses for curious amateurs and degrees granted to committed students in the high-school and collegiate levels[26]. The conservatory offers a unique degree in Colombia: a musical High School Baccalaureate degree. This degree is granted by a branch of the institution that now acts as a government funded High-school that also offers normal instruction. Other degrees include a Licensed Degree in Music and Certificates for informal education courses. The conservatory also offers its installations for the rehearsal of local choirs and bands. The conservatory hopes to expand its curriculum in the collegiate level to include degrees in interpretation, voice and direction of bands.

Historical Evolution of Conservatory

The name and typology are derived from a type of building called *conservatorio*, an orphanage attached to hospitals in medieval Italy. The *conservati* (foundlings) were given musical instruction at the expense of the state.[27]

[26] Conservatorio del Tolima. Informational Booklet, 2004.
[27] "conservatory." Encyclopædia Britannica. 2004. Encyclopædia Britannica Premium Service. 6 Nov. 2004 <**http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?tocId=9025945**>.

The model for contemporary conservatories is derived from the Conservatoire National de Musique et d'Art Dramatique, a French secular institution founded in France in 1795. The initial purpose of the conservatory was to provide instruction to musicians that would serve the state. Eventually the curriculum and scope grew to include all branches of composition, musical interpretation and acting. The conservatory thus became an institution of musical erudition and perfection.[28]

In the specific case of the Conservatory of Tolima, the institution evolved from a small academy of music to the institution we have today in a period that is nearing a century. The main reason for the growth was the vision of Amina Melendro de Pulecio, who acted as director and leader of the institution from 1959 until mid 1990's. She alone transformed the school while dreaming of making the institution a university of music. She was the main force behind the realization of the architectural competition held in 1981.

[28] Ibid.

Analysis of Program Precedents

It is important to state at this point one of the main goals of the program: to adapt to evolution. The final tabulation is to be the maximum area of the institution that is to be built in phases, with elements that begin a transformation process that is more adaptable to the changes of the construction market of the city and that create parts of a more appropriate scale. I believe that a big mistake made in the strategy of the winning competition entry was to rely on completion of a single comprehensive building for all levels. This would have produced a building of unprecedented monstrous scale and its sheer size made it hard to finance and therefore it has not been built.

The buildings that I will analyze (Julliard and the 1981 master plan for annexation) will represent two diametrically opposing ways in which a conservatory can be housed: buildings that have multiple functions or separate buildings and/or wings. The latter method was used in the master plan of the winning entry, with buildings with specific functions in which all the common activities of 3 levels of education shared space. Classrooms were housed in one building; Administrative offices were housed in other spaces and rehearsal spaces in another. The former method breaks down the project into buildings that have more than one function, grouping program according to the demands of separate levels of teaching.

The first type of building allows students to remain in one building where they can remain in the facility most of the day and minimize movement. The second type

of building produces a Euclidean separation of function that relies on pedestrian connections for students to go from one building to the other for class, rehearsal, performance, etc. The first remains in the tradition of cloisters and schools that are located in the district while the other follows a model of campus.

To continue this dialectic of polar opposites, let us compare the extremes of educational building typologies in Colombia.[29] This basic typological analysis tries to introduce assets and problems to be taken into consideration as the building can be inserted into an urban or more open context.

The Cloister

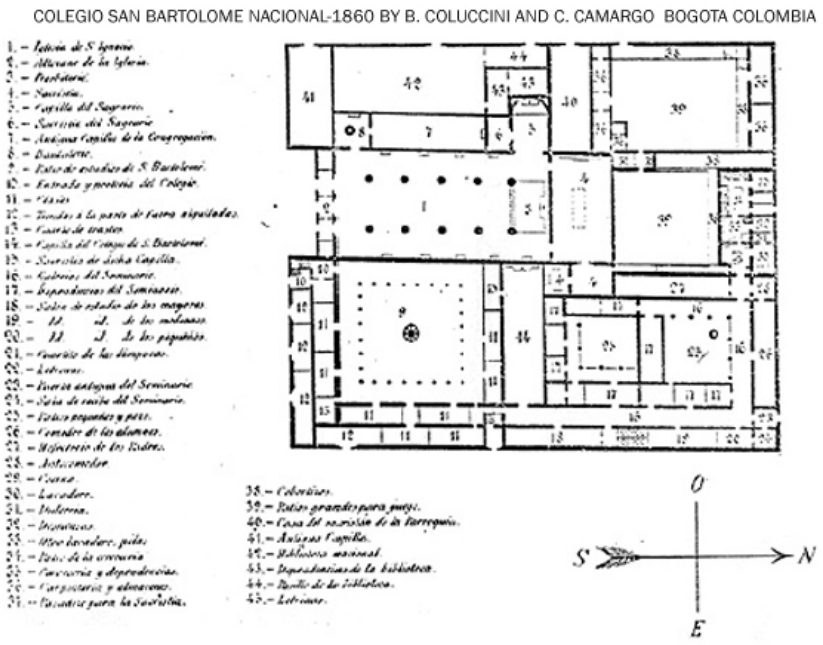


Figure 45. Cloister School in Bogotá. Source: Maldonado Tapias.
Source: Rafael Maldonado Tapias, Historia de la Arquitectura Escolar en Colombia. CD-ROM

[29] Rafael Maldonado Tapias. Historia de la Arquitectura Escolar en Colombia, (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1999). p. 171-174

Convents transmit the calm and austere environment that is propitious to the meditation imbued by its inhabitants and allow a mental translation to remote times.[30]

This typology has its origin in the colonial cloister typology form the 16th and 17th centuries. This typology is associated with religious architecture and institutions. The cloister is easily adapted to urban conditions as well as rural situations. Rooms are arranged around a large courtyard. This typology is introspective and creates an aura of austerity and peace. The disadvantages of this type are their lack of flexibility for growth, its lack of space for the practice of physical education.

This typology is alive and working in Colombia, especially in traditional schools located in urban centers. The courtyard space in which recreation, events and instruction occur has become a traditional space that inspires contemporary interpretations.

The Campus

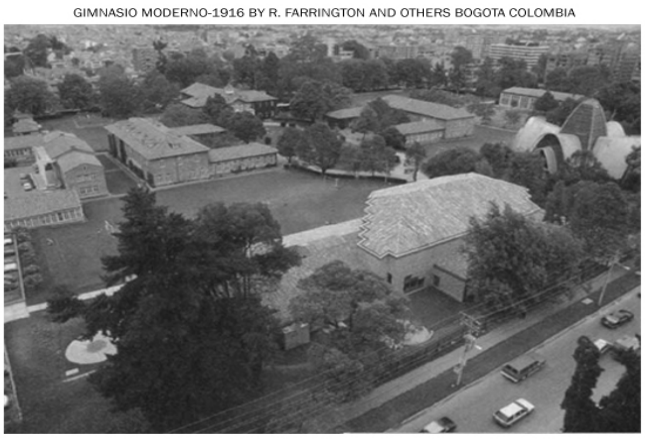


Figure 46. Aerial View of Gimnasio Moderno. Source: Maldonado Tapias.
Source: Rafael Maldonado Tapias, Historia de la Arquitectura Escolar en Colombia. CD-ROM

[30] Silvia Arango. Historia de la Arquitectura en Colombia. (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1989), 52. Translation by the author.

This model was brought from the United States in 1913 when the "Gimnasio Moderno" school was built in the fringes of northern Bogotá and continues to be used today. Based on pedagogical methods that encouraged active participation and contact with exterior areas and nature to stimulate the senses, the campus uses the outside and inside spaces as part of the educational experience. This typology is flexible and can continue to grow over time, according to the new requirements that may arise over the years, with diverse buildings fulfilling different needs.

Its disadvantages lie in the amount of space a campus requires for open space. When applied to schools, this typology tends to be accommodated to the outskirts of the city, removed from urban centers to allow for the open space to be peaceful. When cities grow big, this means that the schools have to move further and further away from the places where students live. This results in disassociation from the city and creates long commutes for the pupils.

Julliard School Area Analysis

The Julliard School is a conservatory of the performing arts. Dance, theater and music are taught mainly at university levels. The building is part of the Lincoln Center complex, complementing the uses of other auditoria. The Julliard School is not a cloister in the strict sense of the word but it is an urban building that contains all of its functions in a single volume. The building stacks its functions with upper levels having a greater degree of privacy for the pupils while the first levels have portions of the program that are open to the public. The 3 performing arts share the floors, enforcing the interaction of pupils in different areas.

CLASSROOMS
MUSIC
THEATER
DANCE
LIBRARY AND BOOKSTORE
ADMINISTRATION
SERVICE AND WC
VERTICAL CIRCULATION
CIRCULATION

FUNCTION	TOTAL AREA (m²)	PERCENTAGE
Theater	1089 m²	6%
Music	2520 m²	13%
Dance	3540 m²	18
General classrooms	2990 m²	15%
Library, Offices, Bookstore	2182 m²	11%
Bathroom and Service Areas	944 m²	4%
Vertical Circulation	1014 m²	5%
Circulation	5506 m²	28%
TOTAL	**19785 m²**	**100%**

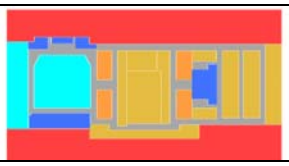
Table 1. Total Tabulation of Areas for Julliard School.

FUNCTION	AREA (m²)
Music	910 m²
Dance	1087 m²
Library, Offices, Bookstore	466 m²
Bathroom and Service Areas	361 m²
Vertical Circulation	243 m²
Circulation	2755 m²
TOTAL	**5802 m²**

Table 2. Street Level Areas.

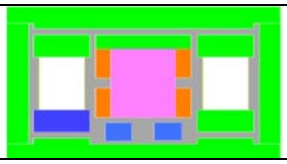
FUNCTION	AREA (m²)
Theater	398 m²
Music	312 m²
Dance	55 m²
Bathroom and Service Areas	116 m²
Vertical Circulation	261 m²
Circulation	1237 m²
TOTAL	**2379 m²**

Table 3. Plaza Level Areas.



FUNCTION	AREA (m²)
Theater	691 m²
Music	1298 m²
Dance	2398 m²
General classrooms	0 m²
Library, Offices, Bookstore	0 m²
Bathroom and Service Areas	330 m²
Vertical Circulation	255 m²
Circulation	942 m²
TOTAL	**5914 m²**

Table 4. Practice Room Level Areas.



FUNCTION	AREA (m²)
Theater	0 m²
Music	910 m²
Dance	1087 m²
General classrooms	2990 m²
Library, Offices, Bookstore	1736 m²
Bathroom and Service Areas	137 m²
Vertical Circulation	255 m²
Circulation	572 m²
TOTAL	**5690 m²**

Table 5. Classroom Level Areas.

1981 Winning Competition Entry Master Plan Area Analysis

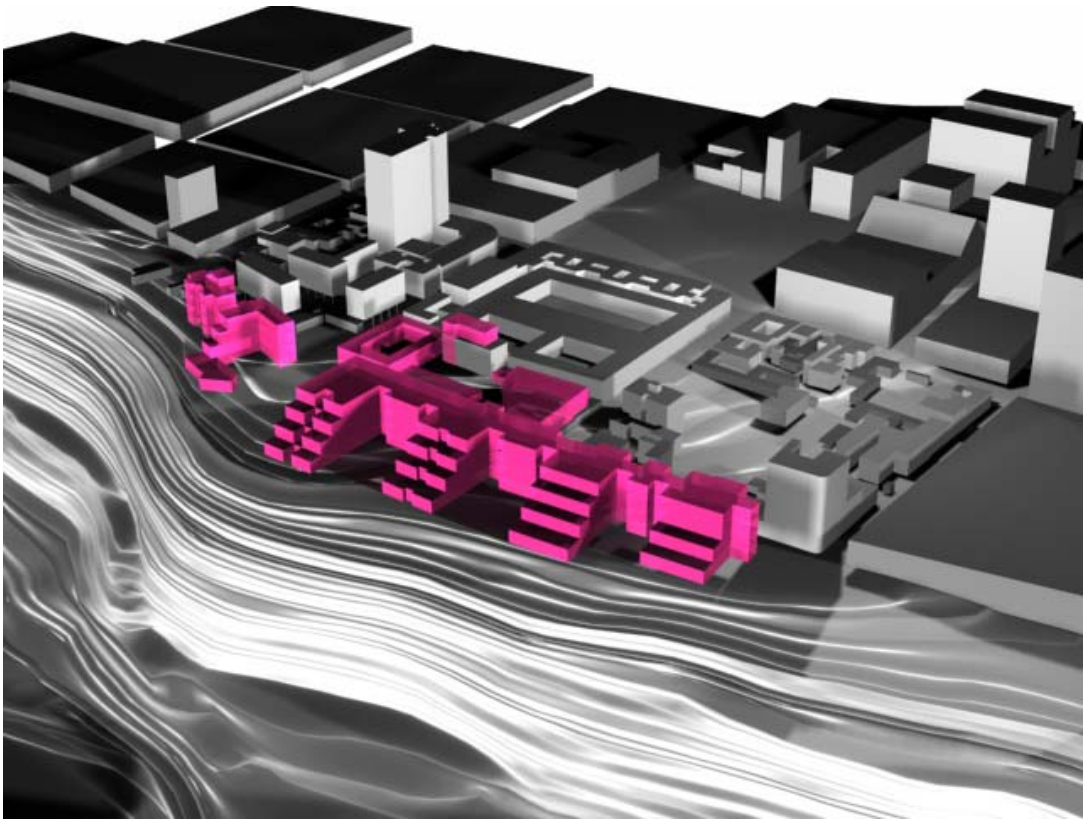


Figure 47. Digital Model of massing of the 1981 winning competition entry Master Plan.

The chosen project that was to be executed has the following problem: the compound that was to be built did not create a dialogue with the city. By choosing to concentrate a great number of students and activities without taking its context into consideration, the series of buildings is isolated, out of character and out of scale with the urban fabric. The problem is not the size or the scope of the dream; the problem is the scale of the buildings it was to produce and the lack of consideration with the rest of the city when this plan was conceived.

The areas that are tabulated here are taken from tracing and calculating rough areas given by the competition entry plans found in the research. I look for a ballpark

figure in terms of total areas and percentages of the areas as they relate to the whole of the program. I will then compare similar figures with Julliard to evaluate the size and scope of the program proposed.

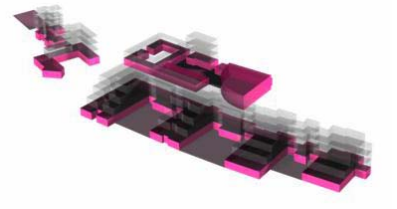
FIRST FLOOR 	
FUNCTION	**AREA (m²)**
Parking	460 m²
Housing	288 m²+ 40 m²= 328 m²
OAS Building [Instituto Bolivariano]	568 m² + 75 m² = 643 m²
Administration [Old Cloister]	518 m² + 235 m² + 222 m² = 973 m²
Alberto Castilla Music Hall	470 m²
Museum/Gallery	166 m²
Auditorium	809 m² + 237 m² = 1046 m²
Schools	2990 m² + 1806 m² = 4796 m²
Usable Areas	6046 m²
Circulation	2143 m²
Open Areas	5490 m²
TOTAL	**11113 m²**

Table 1. First Floor Areas.

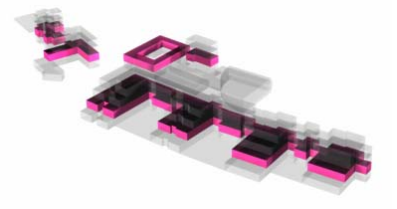
SECOND FLOOR 	
FUNCTION	**AREA (m²)**
Housing	288 m²+ 40 m²= 328 m²
OAS Building [Instituto Bolivariano]	304 m² + 75 m² = 379 m²
Administration [Old Cloister]	423 m² + 176 m² = 599 m²
Museum/Gallery	166 m²
Schools	2477 m² + 1708 m² = 4185 m²
Usable Areas	3658 m²
Circulation	1999 m²
TOTAL	**5657 m²**

Table 2. Second Floor Areas.

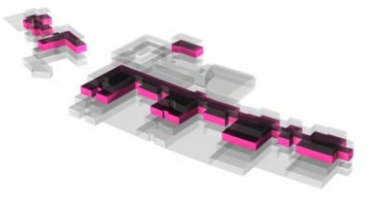
THIRD FLOOR 	
FUNCTION	**AREA (m²)**
Housing	288 m²+ 40 m²= 328 m²
OAS Building [Instituto Bolivariano]	269 m² + 75 m² = 344 m²
Library	166 m²
Schools	2031 m² + 1616 m² = 3647 m²
Usable Areas	2754 m²
Circulation	1731 m²
TOTAL	**4485 m²**

Table 3. Third Floor Areas.

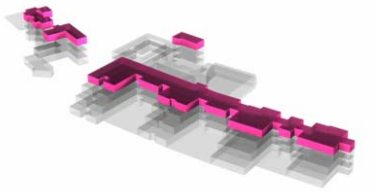
FOURTH FLOOR 	
FUNCTION	**AREA (m²)**
Housing	288 m²+ 40 m²= 328 m²
OAS Building [Instituto Bolivariano]	240 m² + 75 m² = 315 m²
Library	166 m²
Schools	1715 m² + 1530 m² = 3245 m²
Usable Areas	2409 m²
Circulation	1645 m²
TOTAL	**4054 m²**

Table 4. Fourth Floor Areas.

FLOOR	USABLE AREA (m²)	CIRCULATION (m²)	AREA BY FLOOR
1	6046	2143	11113
2	3658	1999	5657
3	2754	1731	4485
4	2409	1645	4054
AREA BY CATEGORY (m²)	**14867**	**7518**	**22385**
PERCENTAGE	**66%**	**34%**	**100%**

Table 5. Analysis per Floor and Percentage Areas.

ZONES	FUNCTION	AREA m²	PERCENTAGE
ADMINISTRATIVE		**941 m²**	**4%**
	OFFICES	941	4%
COMMON AMENITIES		**1612 m²**	**8%**
	PARKING	460	2%
	HOUSING	1152	6%
ACADEMIC		**12304 m²**	**55%**
	AUDITORIUM	1046	5%
	LIBRARY	332	1.5%
	MUSEUM	332	1.5%
	SCHOOLS	9213	41%
	INSTITUTO BOLIVARIANO	1381	6%
CIRCULATION		**10442 m²**	**33%**
	CORRIDORS	7518	33%
	COURTYARDS	2924	Not included
TOTAL		**22385 m²**	**100%**

Table 6. Analysis of Function and Percentages

Space Planning Test and Tabulation

In order to test the program and determine the sizes of the area devoted for each level of learning, I will define the curriculum of the programs to be offered by the conservatory. This will determine the capacity of the school.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	GRADE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY
GRADES	Grades 1-5	Grades 6-11 (general degree)	4 semesters in 2 year programs in Music, Dance or Theater.
		Grades 6-13 (musical degree)	10 semesters in 5 year programs in Music, Dance or Theater.
NUMBER OF CLASSES	**5**	**6-8**	**4-10**
MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT PER CLASS	**40**	**40*** *This number can be multiplied by the number of class sections that a school may provide. Large schools have 4 sections while private schools have only one section.	**40*** **Music: 40. Dance: 20. Theater: 20.** *Based on enrollment of the Peabody Conservatory and number of semesters. www.jhu.edu/registrar/reports/fall04/Headcountdivcomp.html
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	**200**	**240-320**	**160-800**
		TOTALS	**600-1320**
PHYSICAL DISTRIBUTION	Courtyard building with playground that are accessible from the classrooms.	Courtyard Building	Courtyard Building
		Campus	Campus
TYPE OF EDUCATION	Most subjects taught by a single person. Pupils learn in multi-purpose rooms with the exceptions of field trips, morning announcements and Phys Ed.	Cloister Type: Students remain in room and different teachers instruct different subjects. Rooms tend to be multi-purpose. Physical Education is practiced in the courtyard or at an attached facility.	Cloister Type: General and administrative rooms, library, museum and auditoriums are located in the lower levels. General learning rooms may be in the intermediate or upper levels. Practice rooms in the upper levels.
		Campus Type: Teachers remain in specialized room with students moving through the campus from class to class. Physical education is practiced in a Gymnasium.	Campus Type: The components of the school are housed in wings or separate buildings that have a common access area. General and administrative rooms, library, museum and auditoriums are adjacent to the main access.

Table 7. Curriculum and Capacities for 3 levels of education.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	GRADE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY
GENERAL AREA PER PUPIL	2.00 to 2.20 m²	3.4 m²	10 m²/ part-time pupil 25 m²/full-time pupil
ENROLLMENT	200 pupils	320x3sections=960 pupils	800 pupils (all arts) 400 pupils (Music)
AREA	400-440 m²	3264 m²	8000-20000m² (all arts) 4000-1000 m² (Music)
OTHER ROOMS	12-25 m²		
MAX. USABLE AREA	465 m²	3264 m²	10000-20000 m²
CIRCULATION AREA (25% Usable Area)	116 m²	816 m²	2500-5000 m²
TOTAL AREA	**581 m²**	**4080 m²**	**12500-25000 m²**

Table 8. Maximum Areas of Each Level of Learning using Neufert and Number of Pupils.

Source: Ernst and Peter Neufert. Architects' Data, 311.

ROOM TYPE (HIGH SCHOOL)	AREA	PERCENTAGE
General-Purpose Teaching	1390 m²	33%
Science Teaching (Biology/Science/Chemistry)	570 m²	13
Arts, Crafts and Music	325 m²	7
Library	250 m²	6
Administrative	310 m²	7
Phys Ed	405 m²	9
Total Usable Area	3250 m²	75%
Circulation: 25% of Usable Area	813 m²	25%
Total Area	**4063 m²**	**100%**

Table 9. Area Percentages for a 3 section high school, grades 9-12.

Source: Ernst and Peter Neufert. Architects' Data, 307.

The total area given by the rough numbers in the Table 13 as compared with the totals in Table 11, show 17161 m²-25000 m² vs. 22385 m². The figure in the 1981 competition master plan falls in between, which means a number of the following things:

a. The enrollment figure is higher than the one proposed in this test. The High School probably had 4 sections instead of three.

b. Only music was conceived in this conservatory. When other performing arts are included into the mix the area in the higher level doubles.

c. The area that will be devoted for the high school level will be 5440 m². This will leave 16945 m² for the higher level of the conservatory.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	GRADE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY
General-Purpose Teaching	Multi-Purpose Class room: 65-70 m²	Traditional classrooms 1.80 to 2.00 m² Open plan classrooms 3.00 to 5.00 m² Room shapes: (12x20, 12x16, 12x12, 12x10)	Traditional classrooms 1.80 to 2.00 m² Open plan classrooms 3.00 to 5.00 m² Room shapes: (12x20, 12x16, 12x12, 12x10)
Science Teaching (Biology/Science/Chemistry)		Practice rooms 2.50 m²/place Lecture and Demonstrations 4.50 m²/place Max room size: Practice rooms 70-80 m² Demonstration rooms 60 m² Preparation rooms 30-40 m²	
Music and Art		2.5 to 3.0 m²/place Max room size: Practice rooms 70-80 m² Storage 35 m² Art room 80-90 m²	2.5 to 3.0 m²/pupil Max room size: 70-80 m² for practice rooms (small groups) 35 m² for storage
Library/Media Center		0.35 m2/pupil	0.35 m2/pupil

Table 10. Typical areas for classrooms for all educational levels.

Source: Ernst and Peter Neufert. Architects' Data.

ZONES	FUNCTION	AREA m²	PERCENTAGE
(Old courtyard building)	Administrative	**940 m²**	**4%**
	Offices	940 m²	
	SUB-TOTAL PERCENTAGE		100%
COMMON AMENITIES		**1610 m²**	**6%**
	Parking	460 m²	29%
	Housing	1150 m²	71%
	SUB-TOTAL PERCENTAGE		100%
ACADEMIC		**3150 m²**	**13%**
	Auditoria (All Schools)	2000 m²	
	Library	800 m²	
	Museum	350 m²	
EDUCATIONAL			
GRADE SCHOOL		**1020 m²**	**4%**
	ROOM TYPE		
	General-Purpose Teaching	440 m²	43%
	Multiple use room	25 m²	2%
	Courtyard	200 m²	18%
	Administrative Area	150 m²	12%
	Total Usable Area	815 m²	75%
	Circulation: 25% of Usable Area	205 m²	25%
	SUB-TOTAL PERCENTAGE		100%
HIGH SCHOOL		**5440 m²**	**24%**
	ROOM TYPE		
	General-Purpose Teaching	1950 m²	36%
	Science Teaching (Biology/Science/Chemistry)	710 m²	13%
	Arts, Crafts and Music	380 m²	7%
	Library	325 m²	6%
	Administrative	310 m²	6%
	Phys Ed	405 m²	7%
	Total Usable Area	4080 m²	75%
	Circulation: 25% of Usable Area	1360 m²	25%
	SUB-TOTAL PERCENTAGE		100%
UNIVERSITY		**10000 m²**	**43%**
	ROOM TYPE		
	General-Purpose Teaching	1800 m²	15%
	Music	1800m²	15%
	Dance	2400 m²	20%
	Theater	840 m²	7%
	Bathrooms and Services	480 m²	4%
	Administrative	480 m²	4%
	Total Usable Area	7800 m²	65%
	Circulation: 35% of Usable Area	4200 m²	35%
	SUB-TOTAL PERCENTAGE		100%
INSTITUTO BOLIVARIANO		**1380 m²**	**6%**
TOTAL AREA		**23540 m²**	**100%**

Table 11. Proposed Program for Conservatory Annexation.

Conclusions

The scope and size of the program are large. This is not bad. The matter lies in the way the program is packaged. Instead of doing mega-large buildings, the program can be divided into smaller parts that can be inserted in the urban design intervention. This will allow for the conservatory to engage the city and open up to the public more and also to create a more harmonious environment with its context.

The site, with its urban and natural areas, can accommodate buildings that fall between the range of typologies that exist between the cloister and the campus types. The strengths of each typology in terms of educational approach can enforce the location of areas of the program where introspection and concentration are required and where the contact with nature will create beneficial pedagogical and psychological effects.

My proposed final program will be similar to the program introduced in the 1981 expansion. Revisions include other types of classrooms for the high school, and expanding the conservatory to include dance and theater programs at the university level. In essence, the conservatory annexation is a complex of buildings for the teaching of school, music and performing arts.

The strategy to incorporate this program into the site will be to house the different educational levels in separate buildings linked by the existing street structure much in the manner of urban campuses like New York University. This presents the following advantages:

- These buildings will have a scale that is appropriate for the scale of the buildings around the site.

- The separation of education levels in different buildings promotes the use of the existing streets integrating the project to the city.
- Separate buildings according to educational level allow for better use of the facilities as it reduces the possible conflict in scheduling and room programming that a single structure might present.

Chapter 4: Precedent Analysis

The study of precedents explores different approaches to the strategy of interventions of the edge condition, dealing with topography, conservatory configurations and program sizes and additions to existing fabric and patrimonial buildings.

The first precedents look at pre-Columbian urbanism. The Maya and the Inca cultures lived immersed in nature and in the case of the Incas, in places with steep topography. Nature and man-made merge into a sum that is greater than the sum of its parts. This relates to the issue raised in chapter 1 with blurring the edge or the distinction of the city and wilderness.

The next set of precedents looks at two examples of conservatories that differ in their configuration. The Julliard School in New York is part of an urban context that it responds to while the Hamburg Music School embraces its surroundings by opening its "arms" to the forest where it sits.

Finally, I will look at an example of an annexation/restoration effort in Spain that uses the remains of a Gothic church in conjunction with a series of buildings that create a series of courtyards where old and new co-exist in harmony. This case is particularly relevant as a part of the intervention, the part that I intend to develop further into the design process, has two patrimonial buildings that are connected by courtyards.

Maya Urbanism

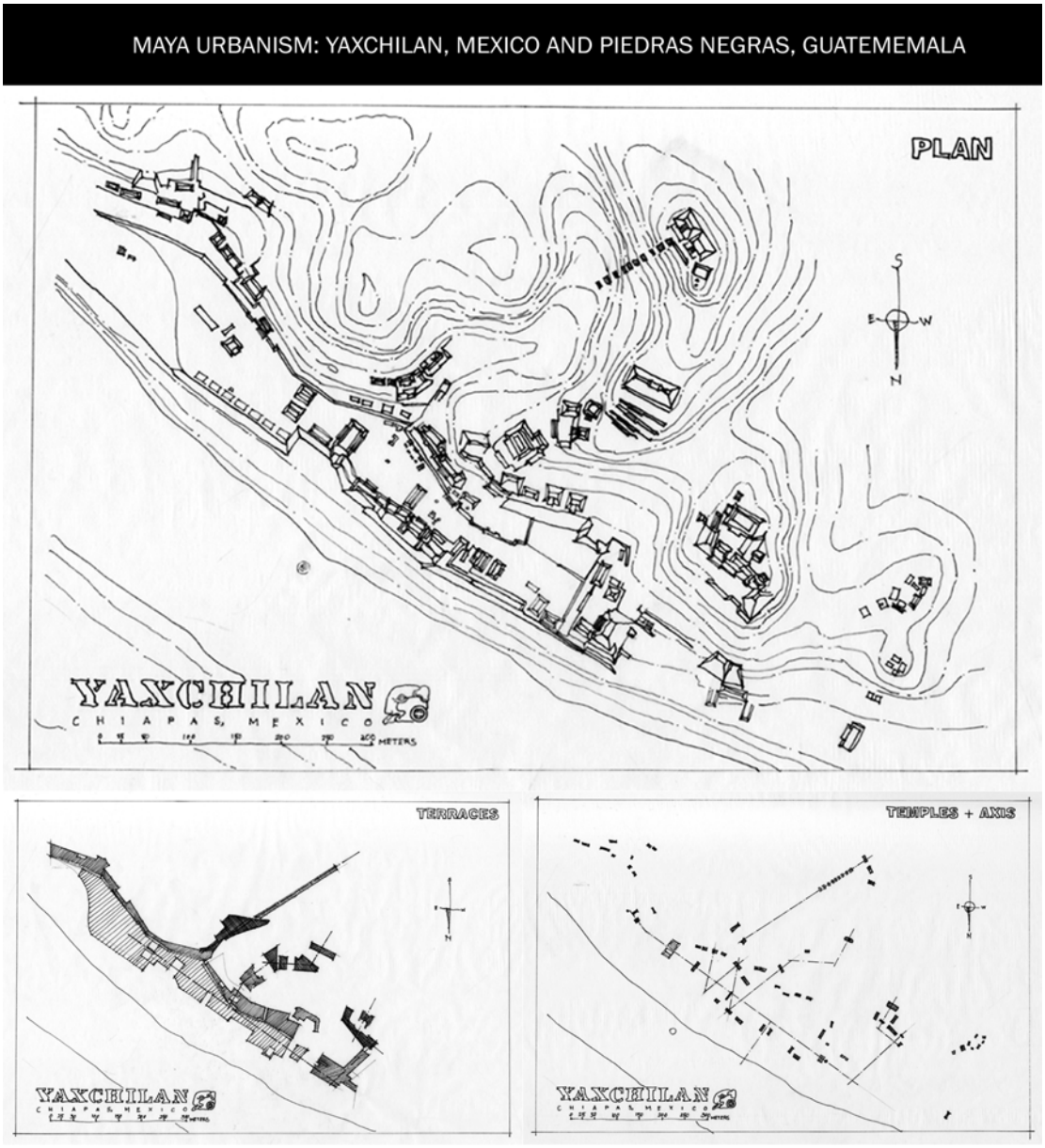


Figure 48. Analysis of Yaxchilán, Mexico

Mayan Urbanism works with the topography and the characteristics of its site to create urban spaces that blur the distinction between nature and man-made. Terraces, mounds and pyramids merge with the mountain to clear areas for a series of small monumental temples. The temples configure streets and squares loosely.

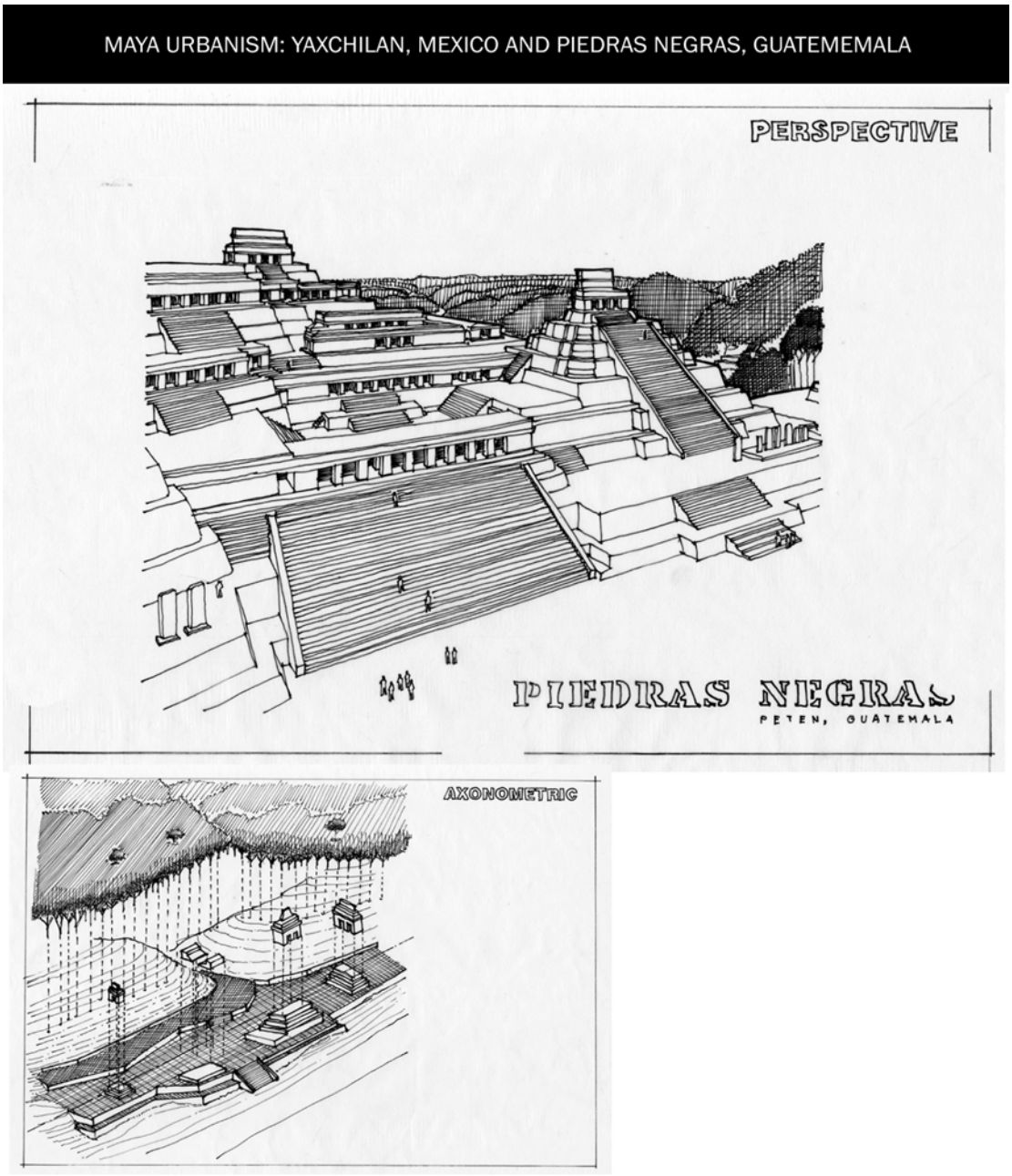


Figure 49. Perspective of Piedras Negras, Guatemala and Axonometric Diagram

The man-made city follows the logic of nature: the city is made of mountains and plains made of stone. Notice the connections between open spaces by use of monumental stairs. The temple on top of a pyramid is analogous to a hut that stands on top of a mountain.

Inca Urbanism

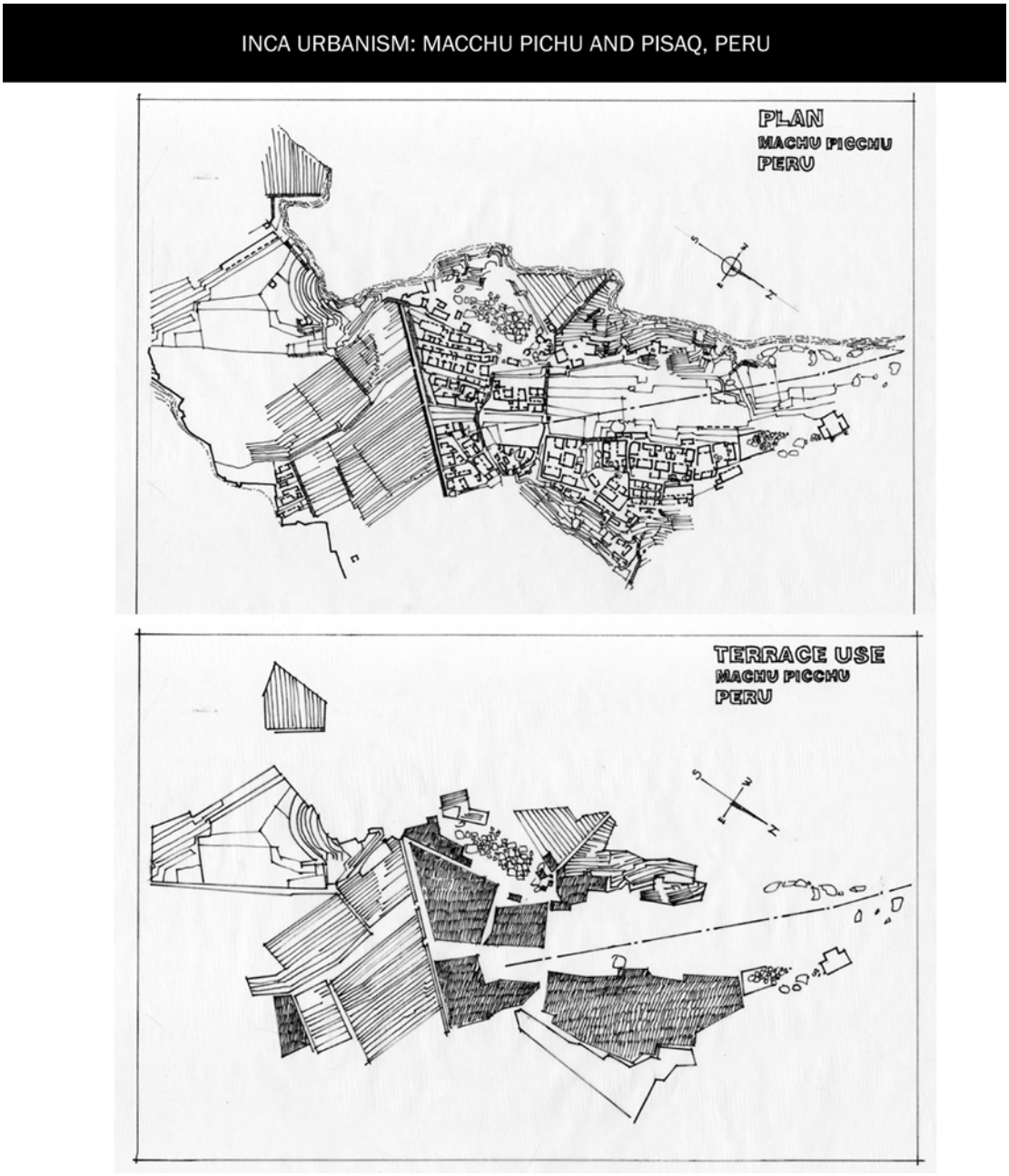


Figure 50. Analysis Diagrams of Machu Picchu.

Machu Picchu is a small city organized with terraces that are specialized in function. Separate functions have separate terraces: the ones shaded darker are for housing and while the others are destined for agriculture. The terraces also configure a central monumental space that is aligned with a mountain that dominates the view.

INCA URBANISM: MACCHU PICHU AND PISAQ, PERU

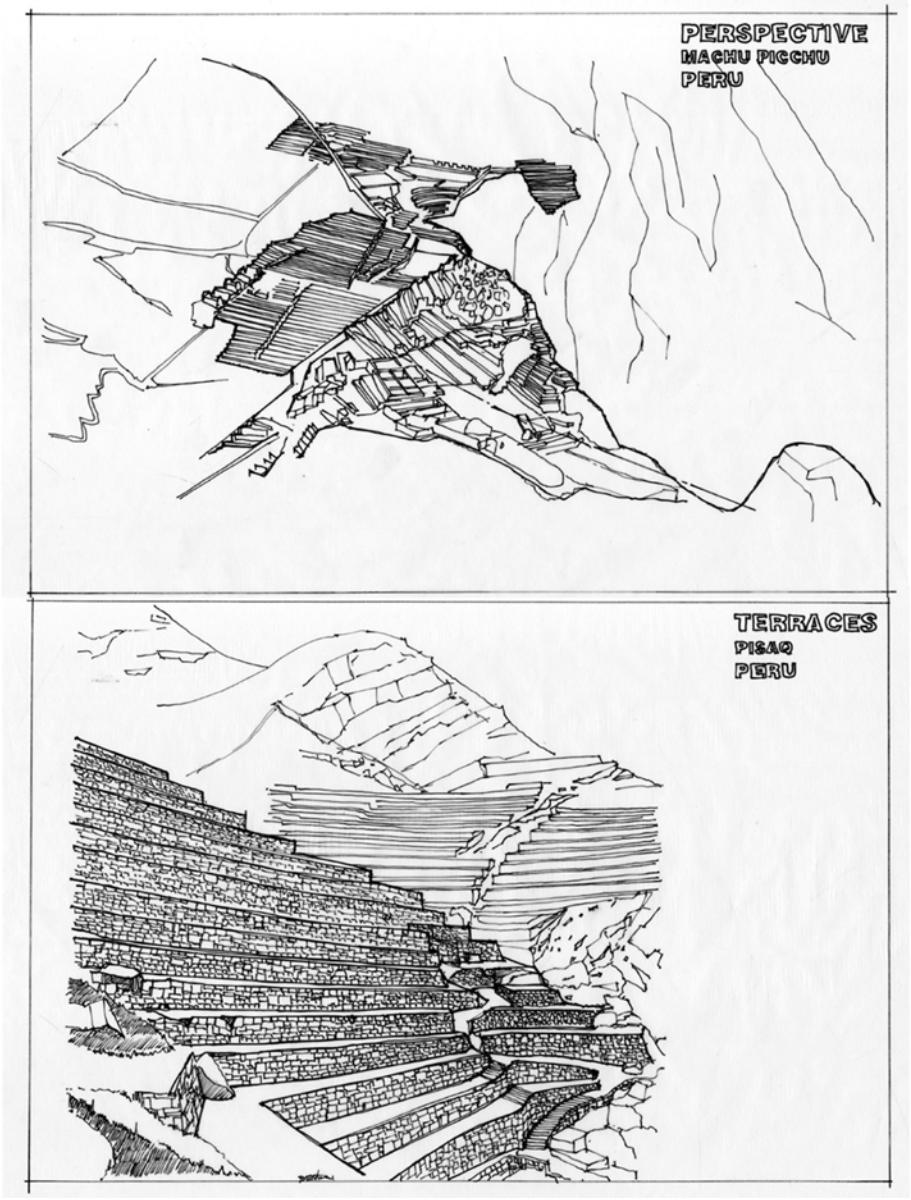


Figure 51. Perspectives of Machu Picchu and Pisaq.

The terraces of Inca urbanism tried to mediate between the slope and the need for flat areas for agriculture and human settlement. The product is a compromise in which the city follows the logic of the mountain. The city is a set of monumental terraces that read as stairs of the landscape and cohabit with it harmoniously

The Julliard School

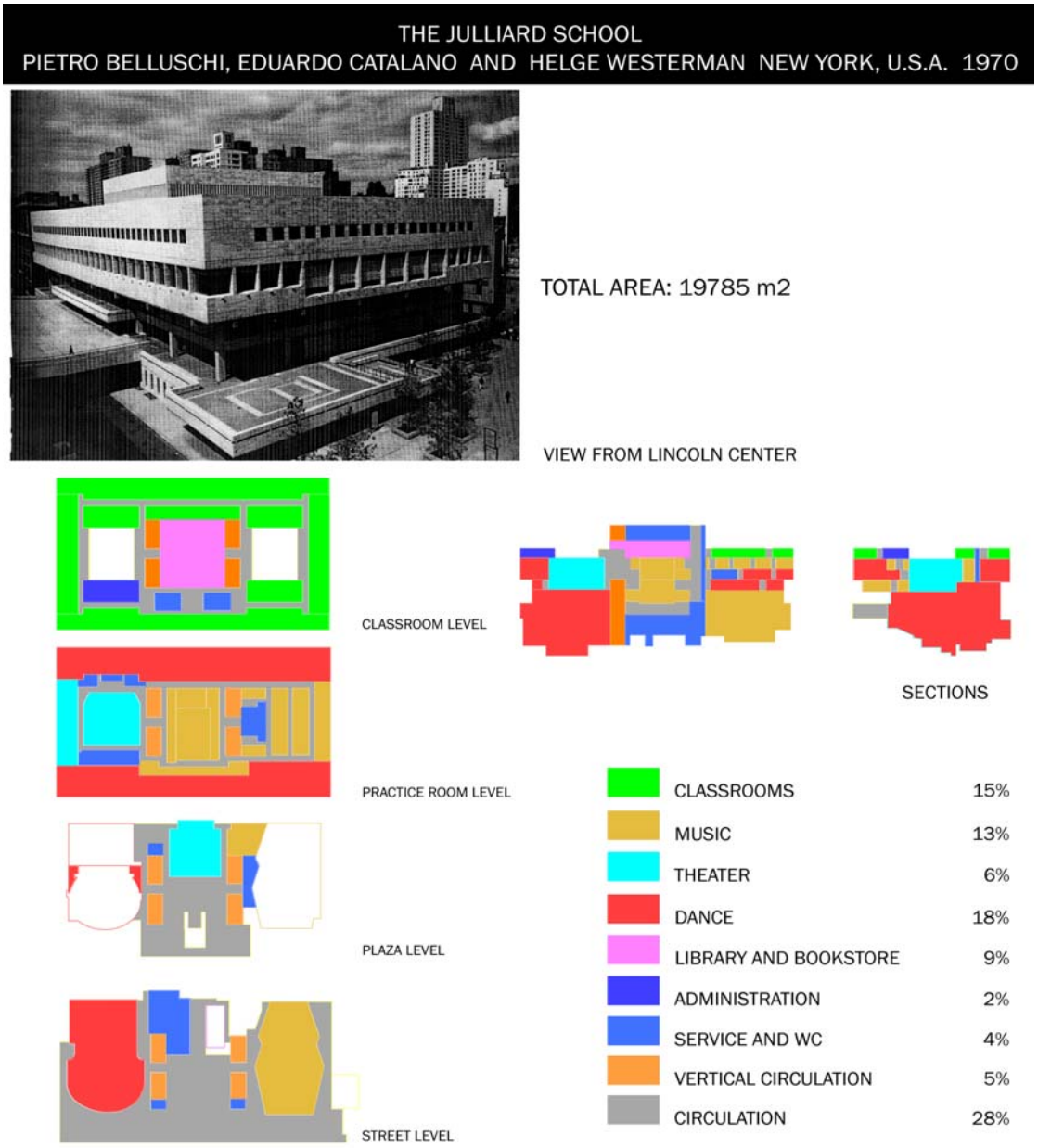


Figure 52. Julliard School Area and Configuration Analysis.

This conservatory for the performing arts is arranged in floors that have ever more private uses as one goes up. Each performing has its own auditorium, which is open to the public in presentations, recitals and plays. The smaller areas of the program cover the auditoria to mediate between the big volumes and the urban context.

Music School in Hamburg, Germany

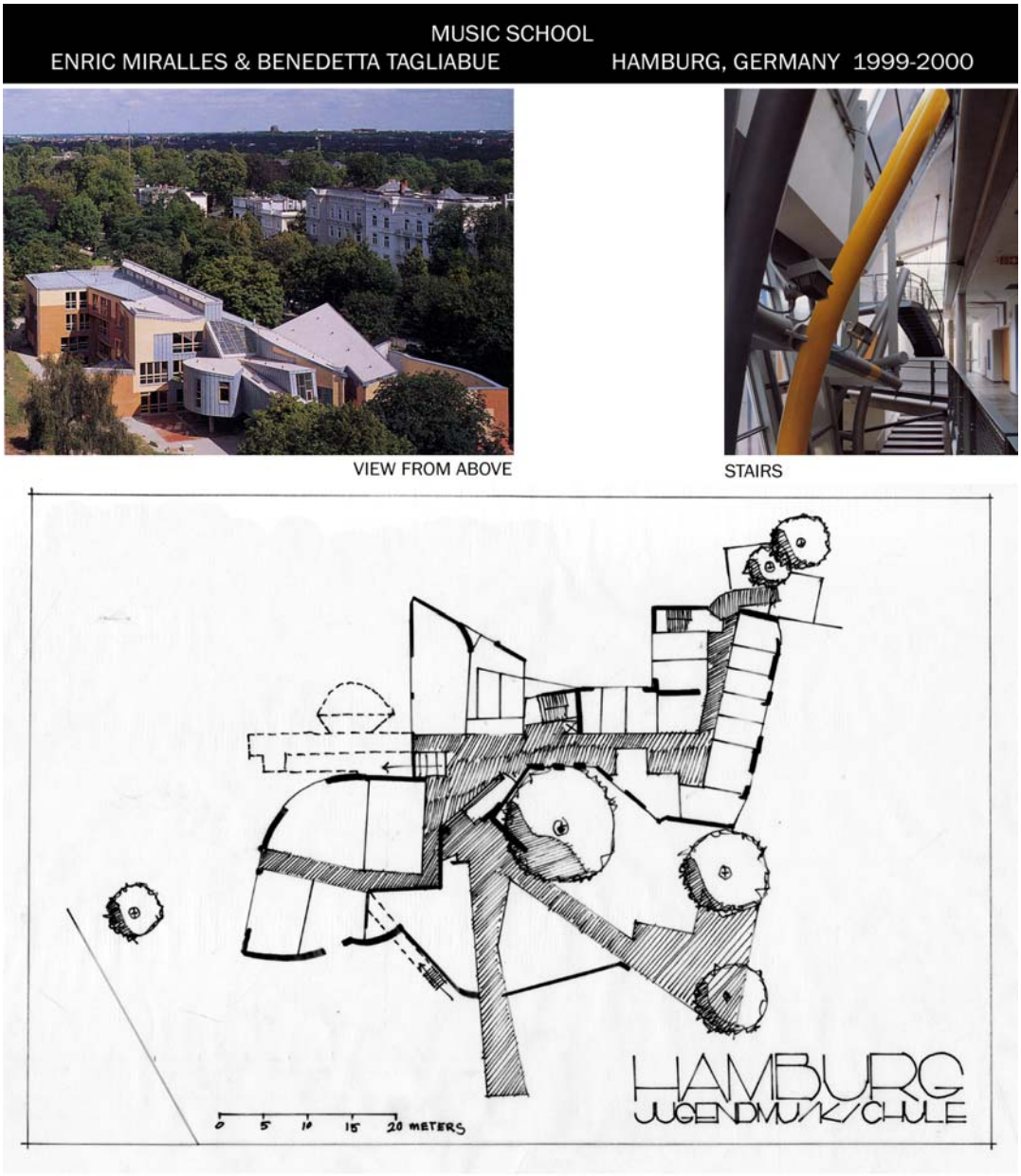


Figure 53. Analysis of Hamburg Music School.

This building has two compelling traits: one the first hand, its dynamic volumetric configuration speaks of a moving, energetic quality of the program it houses; on the other hand, the wings of the building hug the trees and its surroundings. The functions are separated in wings that wrap around the trees, as if trying to make the pupil live in the forest and play in the forest.

Rei Alfonso Enriques Hispano-Portuguese Institute

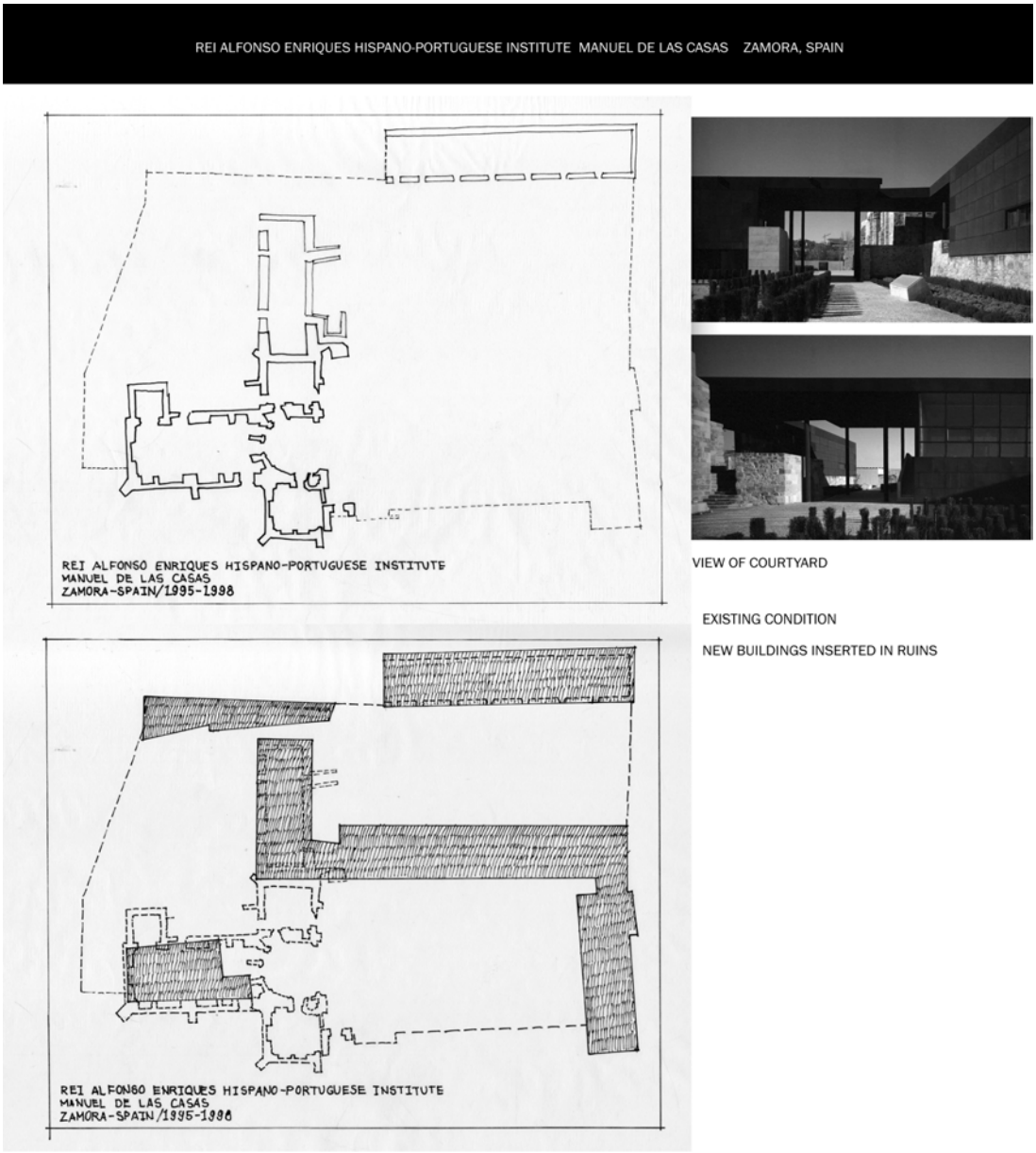


Figure 54. Analysis Hispano-Portuguese Institute Rei Alfonso Enriques.

The new buildings inserted in this complex are configured in order to create a series of courtyards in which the contrasting materials and tectonics cohabit. The gothic ruin is intervened with great care, as parts of the program touch it and stand on top of it. The form maker of the scheme is the yard, understating buildings that nonetheless assert their contemporary character with conviction.

Conclusions

The Pre-Columbian examples for urban strategies are quite useful in terms of conquering the edge with a strategy that immerses the program into the context and the topography. Parts of the urban strategy and the conservatory program can be in the forest as part of the system in which man-made structures are merged with their context and their place. These ideas go well with the notion of "blurring" edges that is mentioned in Chapter 1.

The conservatory examples present two opposite poles of organizing the program. These poles are largely determined by their context. On the one hand, a conservatory can be an introverted building with multiple functions inserted in an urban context; on the other hand, the conservatory can "hug trees" by separating area of the program in wings that wrap around the context. This strategy can be done with a singular building or have a series of buildings in a campus. Both are relevant as the thesis contains both urban and natural contexts that can be used for the annexation.

The Hispano Portuguese Institute example shows another strategy: an idealized space as a place maker. Courtyards and/or urban spaces can be created by using fragments from the past that are complemented by new buildings assert their character while respecting their context. Different layers of history and memory co-exist in these places, such as the polyphonic moment proposed in the first chapter.

Finally, the Music School in Hamburg was also chosen for its bold architectural language. This language is a contemporary take on the issue of character of program. The warped shapes speak of the aural and dynamic qualities of the program and its close relationship to sound. But this must be said: this language

is a choice. To say that acoustics affect the shapes of the volumes would be a gross exaggeration. Julliard is a very sober volume and it functions well. I question Julliard's architectural language as expressionless but it has the quality of being neutral enough to work well in an urban context. The issue then becomes where and how this bold architecture is relevant in site and the thesis.

Chapter 5: Preliminary Site Interventions and Partis

Design Goals

The main goals of this thesis are 4, divided into concerns deal with the nature of the site, the character that music will give to the compound of buildings and how to address the annexation of the conservatory as part of a larger dynamic that is shaping the architecture and the urban space of downtown Ibagué.

The first goal deals with the nature of edge. "Edge" is a condition with specific characteristics and pressures that will inform my decision making process. The challenge is to define "boundary" or "limit" and identify its properties as driving design ideas. These principles will be applied to the intervention of the downtown district as it meets the cliff of the Combeima River.

The second goal is the consolidation of place and architecture in a changing physical context. The transformation of the downtown district is caused by economical and political phenomena that are likely to continue this trend for years. The challenge then is to create a place where the program or land-use remain while the physical manifestation of them evolves, transforms and also disappears. I believe that instead of being obfuscated by this transformation, I should try to harness it and articulate the strategy behind the addition to the scenarios that might happen in the future.

The third goal deals with the nature of program and how this imbues the project with a distinct character or "spirit". Learning Music and the performing arts requires a great deal of concentration and perfectionism. These qualities are to be enforced by surroundings to harness the emotional investment of the pupils while also

projecting the uplifting purpose of these disciplines into the urban context. This elusive quality, this "spirit" of the program is essential to motivate and inspire the pupils of the institution.

Finally, annexation is understood not only as an architectural issue but as an urban design issue. The way the program is to be accommodated in the city is related to issues of physical and programmatic scale. The ambitious program that is desired is to be tested in order to come to a conclusion about the scope of the program and the strategy to give physical shape to it. The addition or additions to the conservatory have to be done with great care to the existing buildings, the surrounding urban and natural context and the downtown district as a whole, while consolidating the edge to be created while being a part of the larger organism of the district.

Design Issues

The issues are divided into categories that deal with the scale of intervention. The programs is large enough to consider both urban design and architectural scales into the decision making process. The scales of intervention are intersected by the variables of character of program, urban and natural context.

On the urban scale, the issues are as follows:

1. Create a satisfactory border to the downtown district of Ibagué. This includes defining (or not defining) an edge condition that will bring vitality to this place of the city as well as taking advantage of the vistas that the cliff has to offer with open public space.
2. Deal with the divisive nature of "Carrera 1" street. The area of intervention is sliced like a knife by this street.

3. Create a strategy to intervene the city with a series of buildings that are not disproportionate to the context.
4. Create better access to the town and to conservatory for pedestrians and public transportation.

The issues that are related to the architectural scale are:

1. Provide an appropriate place to perfect the skills of performing arts. The character of this type of learning is crucial to this issue.
2. Provide a program that is ambitious in scope but not excessive in size.
3. Give the conservatory a distinctive character that is contrasting and complementary to the patrimonial buildings and to the district as a whole.
4. Deal with the steep topography of the edge of the site with architecture and/or landscape design.
5. Divide the school into buildings that use the existing street system to connect. The division of buildings will be determined by age level.

Site Interventions

I will show 4 different site intervention strategies. They look to define the relationship of the city and the program of the conservatory with the edge of the escarpment and the forest that I propose for all interventions:

City Wall: housing defines the edge of the city as wall, enforcing the distinction between nature and city. The conservatory would then become part of an infill effort to configure the street that is adjacent to the city wall.

Terminating Calle 10: a public square would terminate Calle 10, which is lined with important institutional buildings and schools. This square would be a viewing area for the public to enjoy the mountains, the trees and the valley below. The square would be faced with the most "civic" elements of the conservatory, namely auditoria and a library for the use of the pupils and the public.

City Balcony: a balcony that lines the edge would be a seam that defined the interaction of city and nature. In this viewing area a series of public buildings would make this urban balcony come alive. Mainly for pedestrian use, this intervention would also fill the holes in the blocks adjacent to the conservatory.

Cascading Terraces: the program of the conservatory would be a campus on a set of cascading terraces that would follow the contours of the mountain closely. Inspired by the pre-Columbian precedents studied in Chapter 4, this scheme blurs the distinction of city and edge, taking the city to the river on a promenade shaded with trees that find a monumental building dominating each terrace. The buildings that activate this promenade do not have to be part of the conservatory program.

City Wall

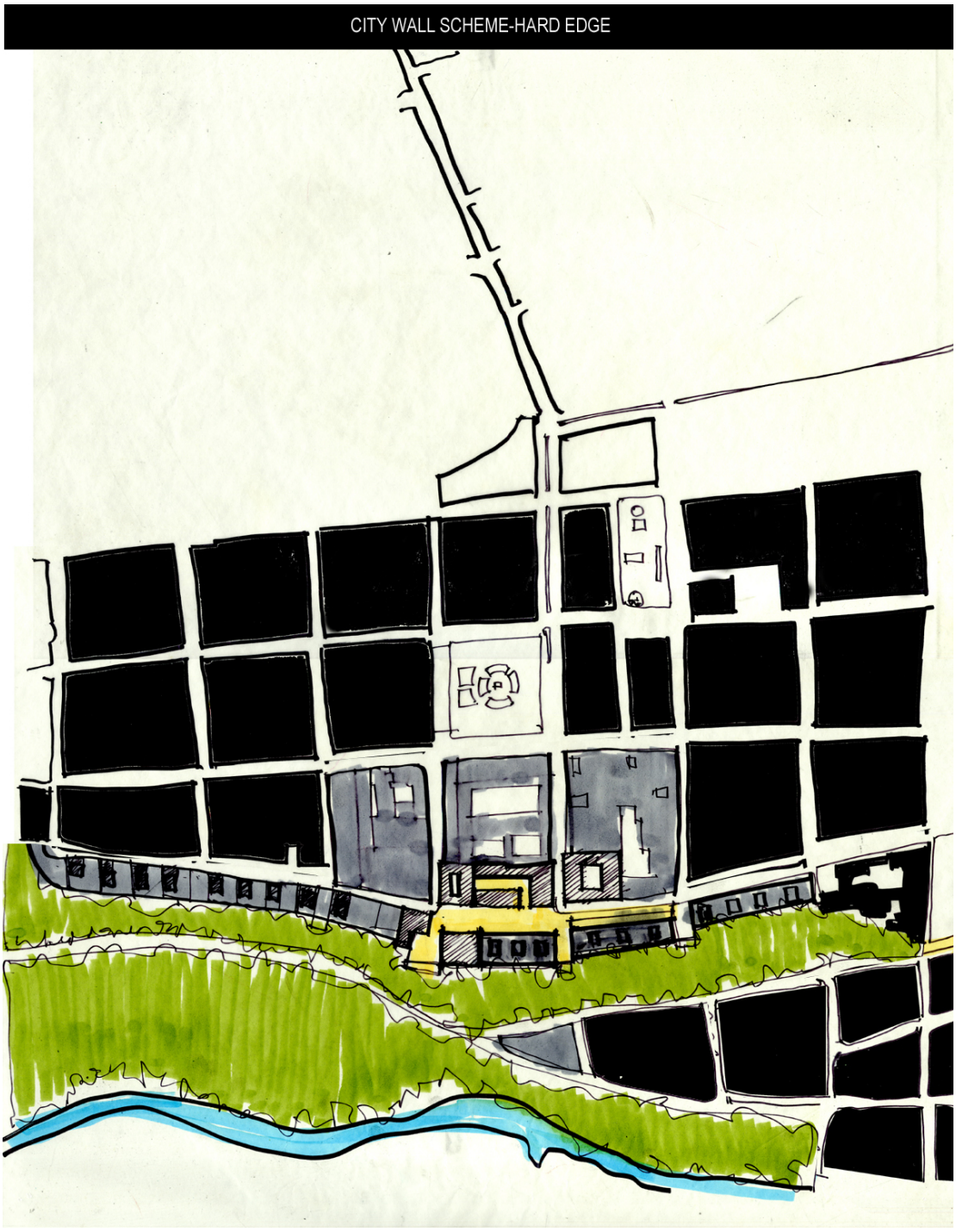


Figure 55. Diagram of "City Wall" site intervention.

Terminating Calle 10

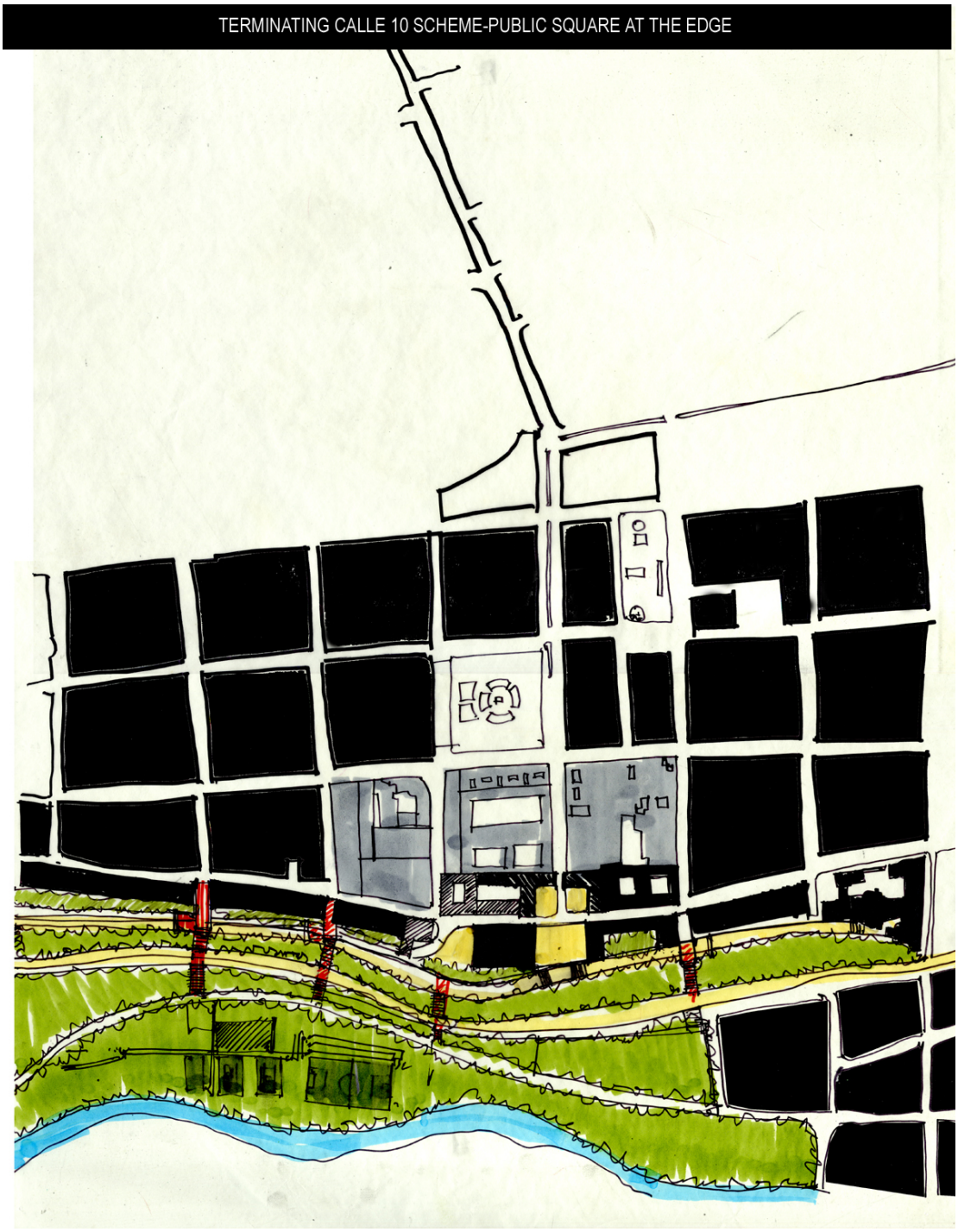


Figure 56. Diagram of "Terminating Calle 10" site intervention scheme.

City Balcony

Figure 57. Diagram of "City Balcony" site intervention scheme.

Cascading Terraces

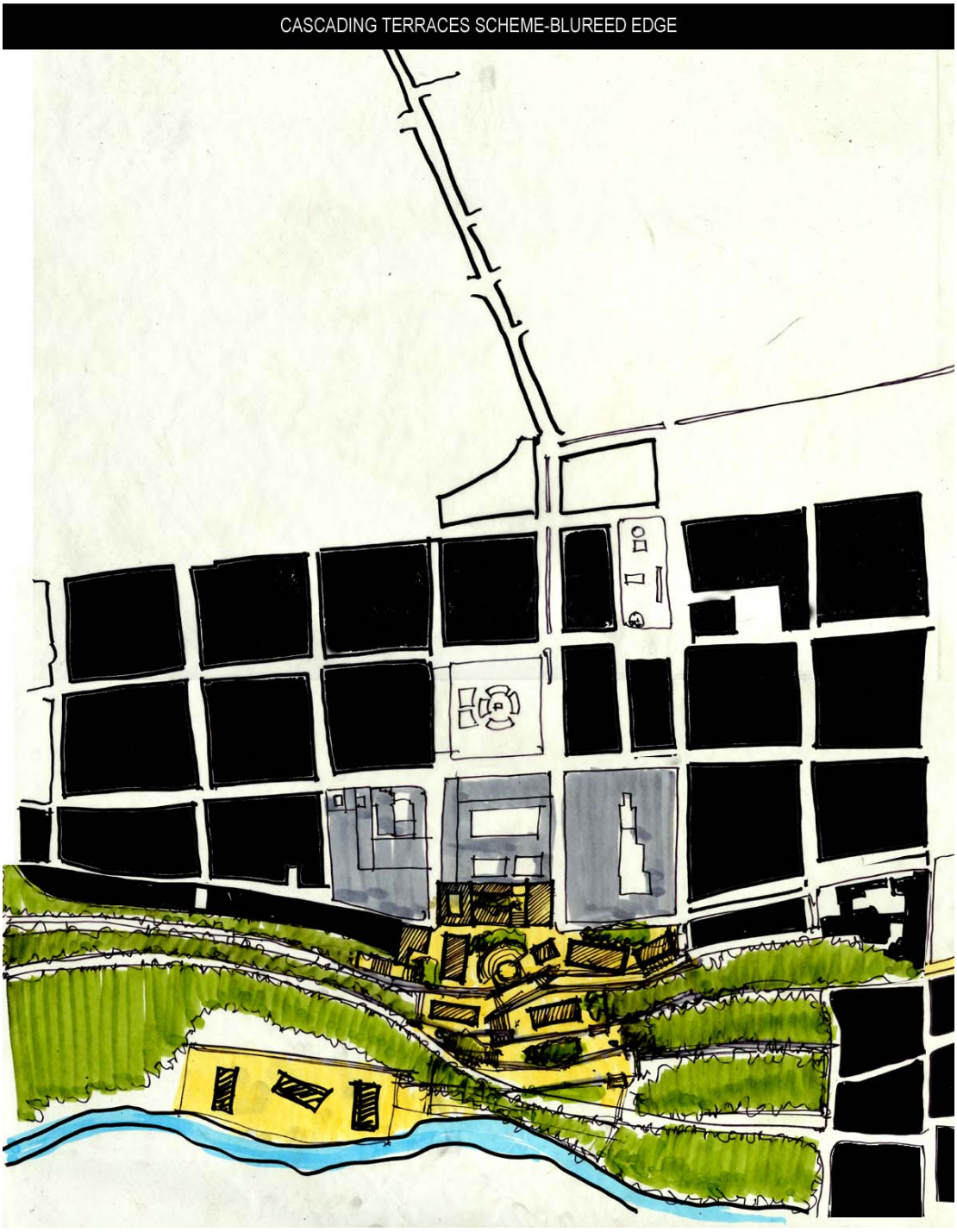


Figure 58. Diagram of "Cascading Terraces" site intervention scheme.

Partis

The 4 Parti strategies here presented explore the way the bigger areas of the conservatory might be arranged in the context of edge definition. The biggest issue is the connection of the different elements of the program in the program. Instead of housing all schools in one building, I choose to break the program in parts that I massage into the site and use to fill spaces in the blocks.

Urban Fillings/Hard Edge: the conservatory would be housed in courtyard buildings that are adjacent to the patrimonial complex on the north side of Carrera 1. The edge can be open or closed as in the strategies of "City Wall" and "City Balcony". The street system would remain intact.

Terminating Calle 10: the buildings facing the square that terminates Calle 10 will be shaped to create a sense "ideal void" overlooking the valley. Here the conservatory makes the grand gesture of opening the city to the landscape. The rest of the intervention would be along the lines of the "City Wall" intervention.

Perpendicular Bars/Connectors of Nature and City: a series of bridge/buildings connect areas of the conservatory over Carrera 1. This strategy does not go well with any of the "site strategies proposed, but it presents the interesting quality of pedestrian connections that do not interrupt the vehicular flow of the city.

Blurred Edges/Trees and Program Intertwined: the program would be mad of many small bits that would combine with the trees. The private elements of the program would merge with nature while making the public areas as temples much like the Maya example. An underground connection would connect the areas to the city.

Urban Fillings/Hard Edge

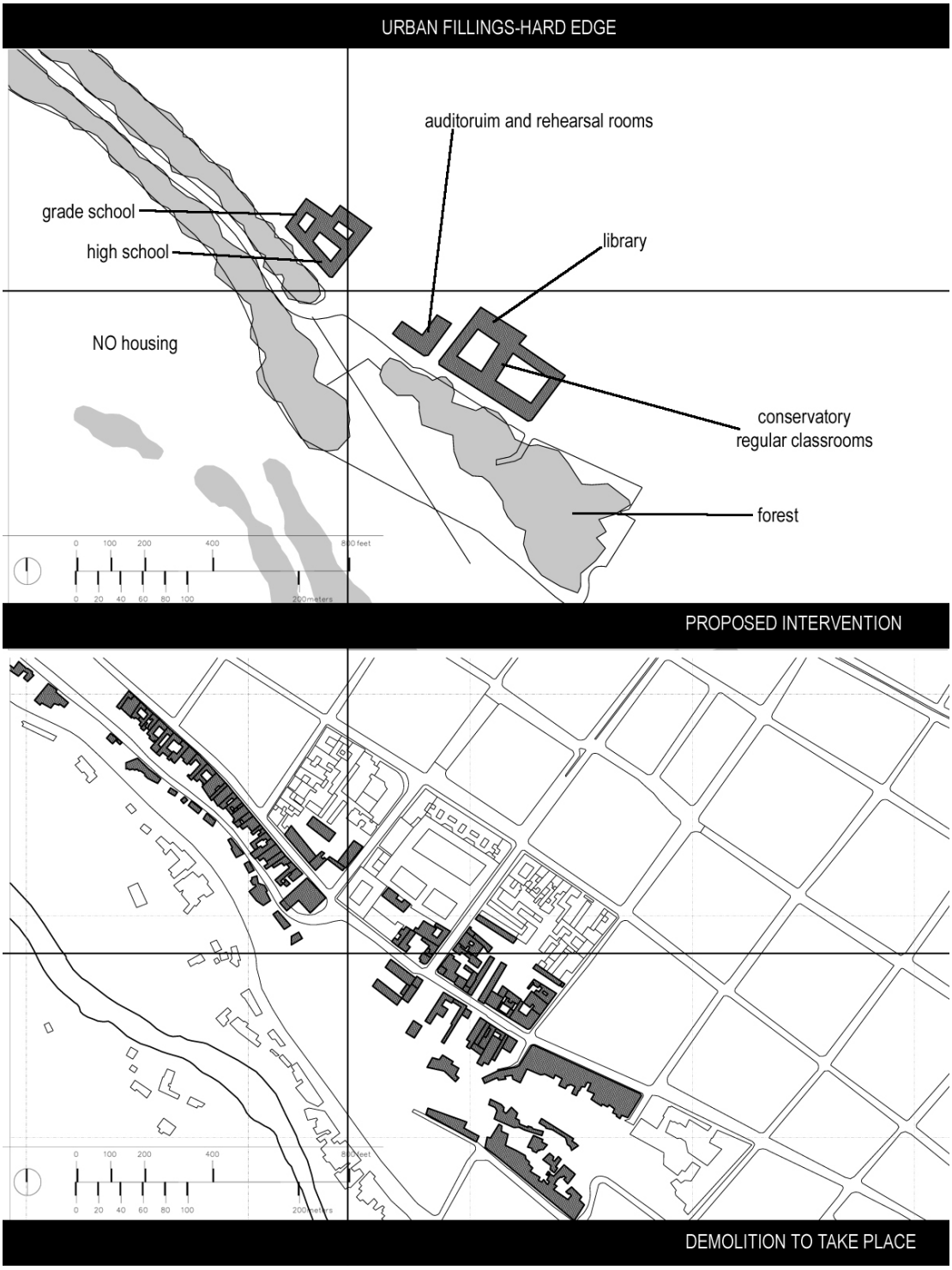


Figure 59. Proposed buildings and Demolition for "Urban Fillings" parti.

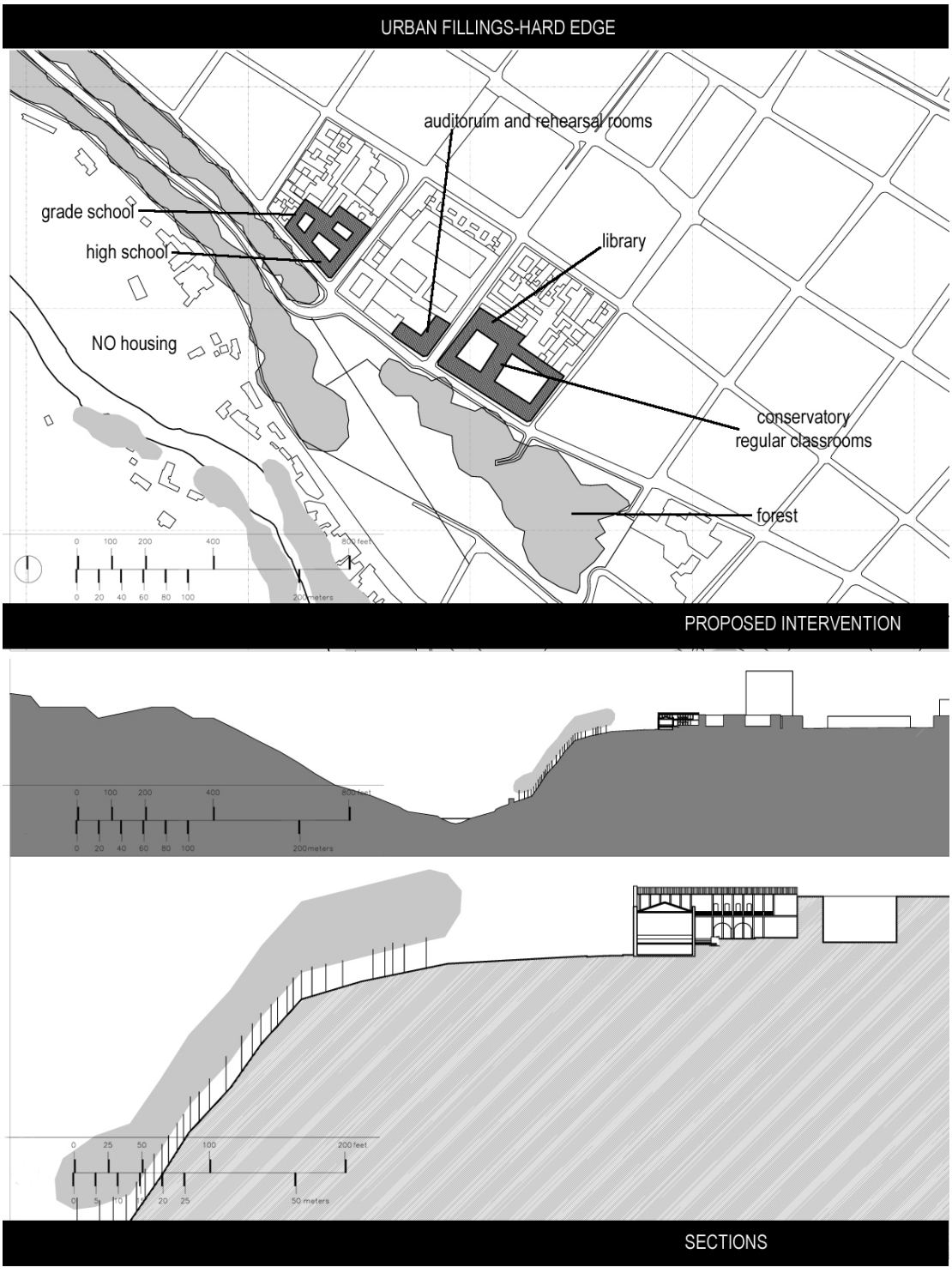


Figure 60. Proposed intervention in context and Sections for "Urban Fillings" parti.

Terminating Calle 10/Ideal Void Shaping

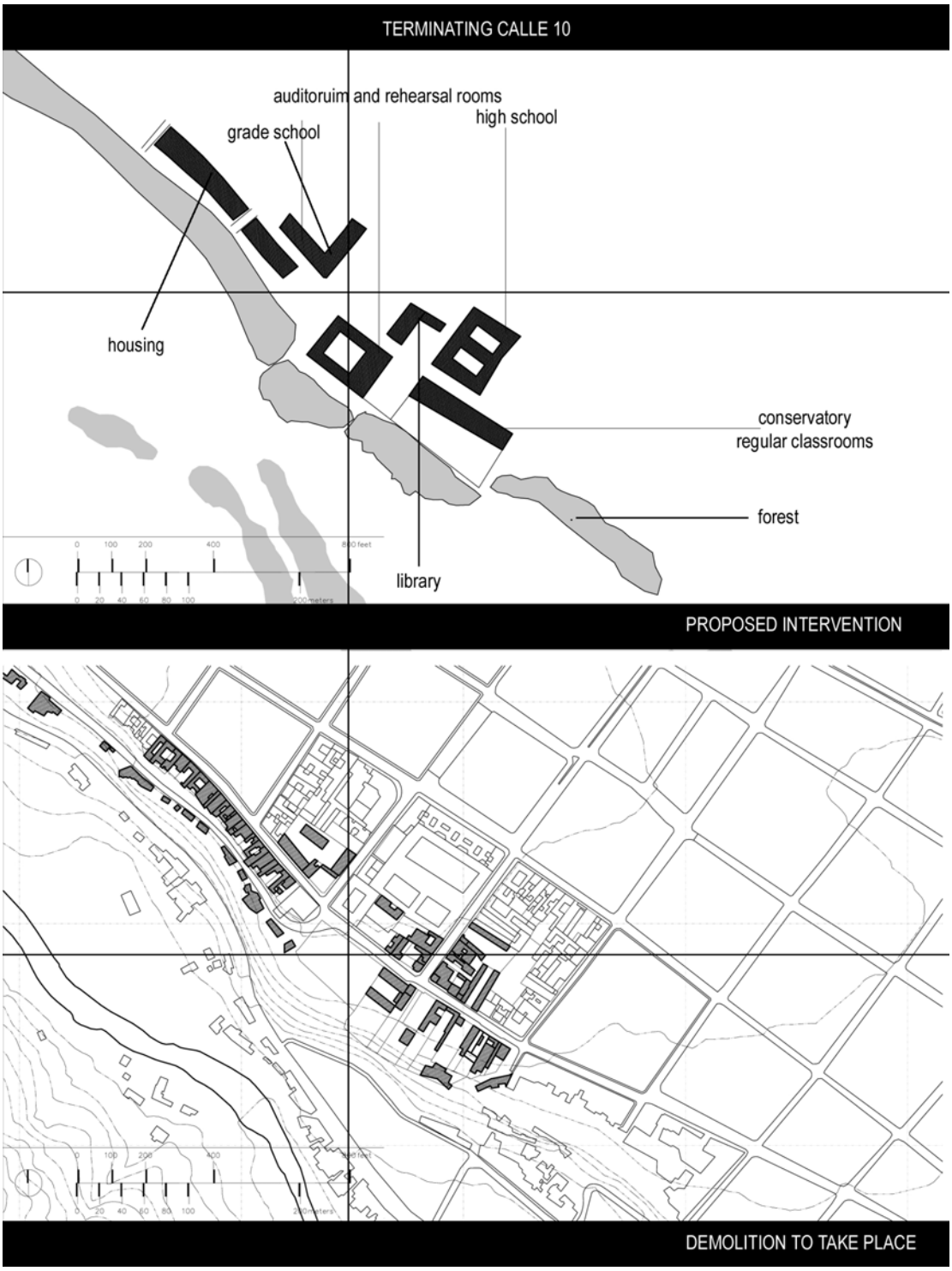


Figure 61. Proposed buildings and Demolition for "Terminating Calle 10" parti.

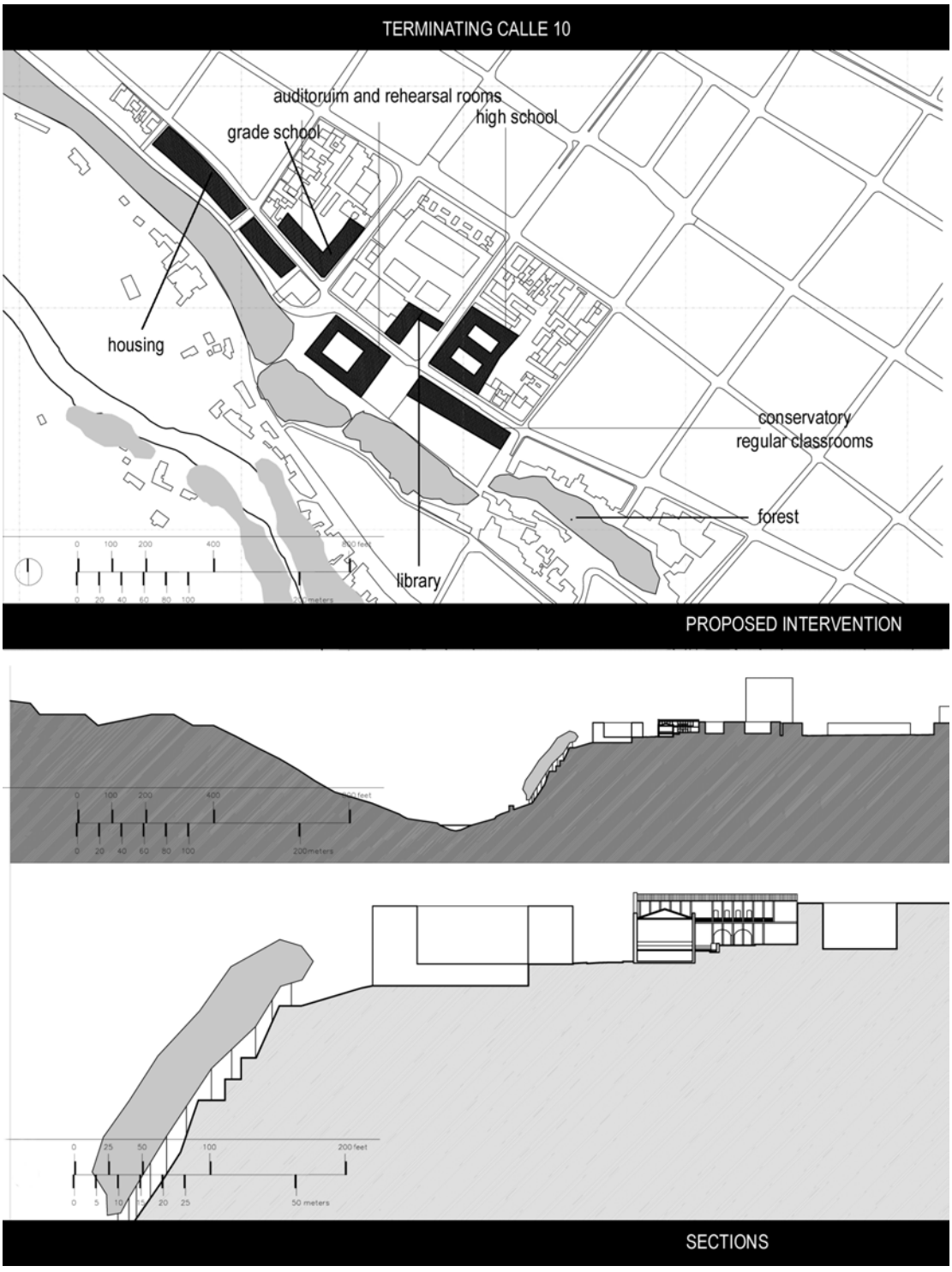


Figure 62. Proposed intervention in context and Sections for "Terminating Calle 10" parti.

Perpendicular Bars/Connectors of Nature and City

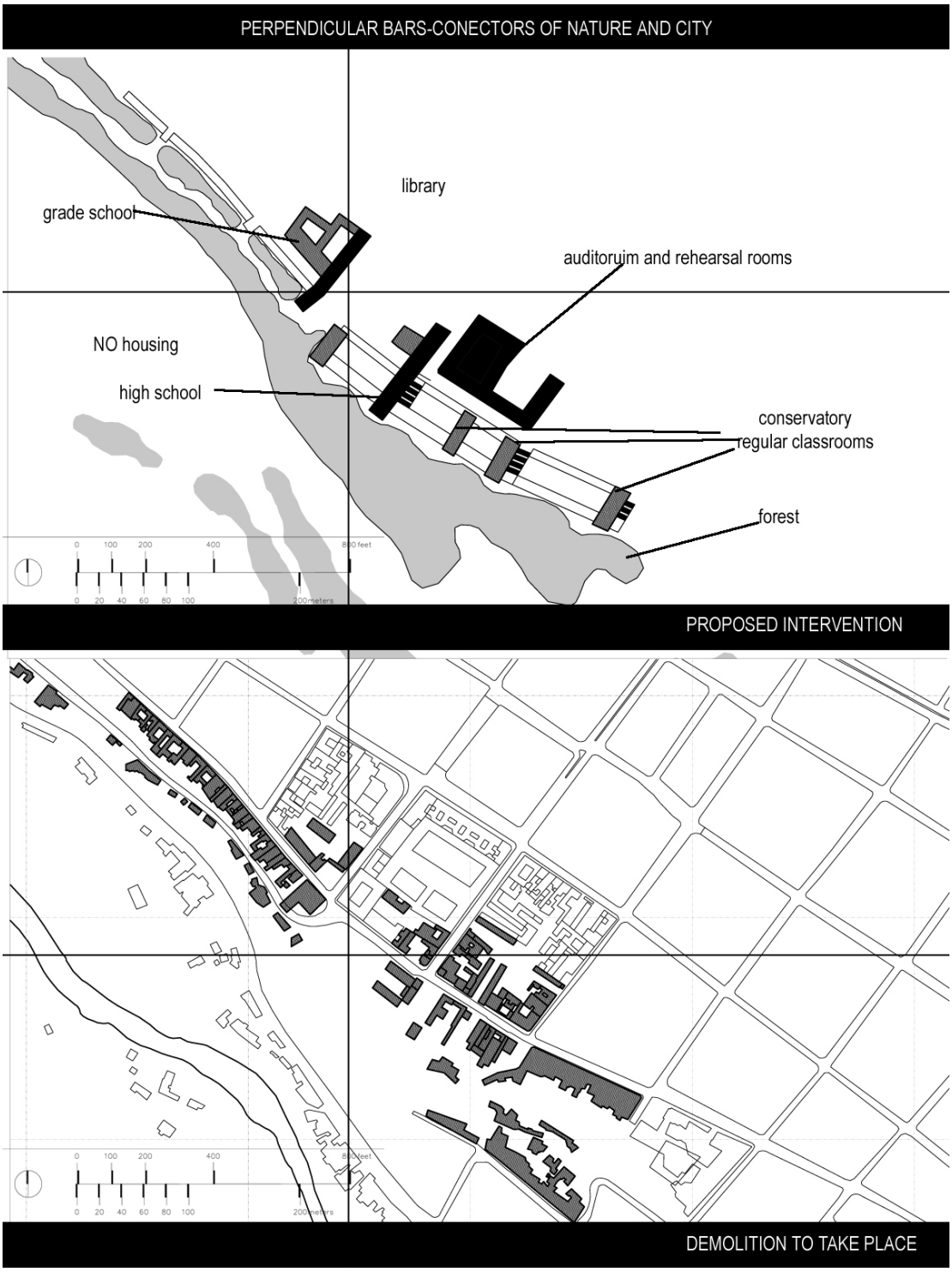


Figure 63. Proposed buildings and Demolition for "Perpendicular Bars" parti.

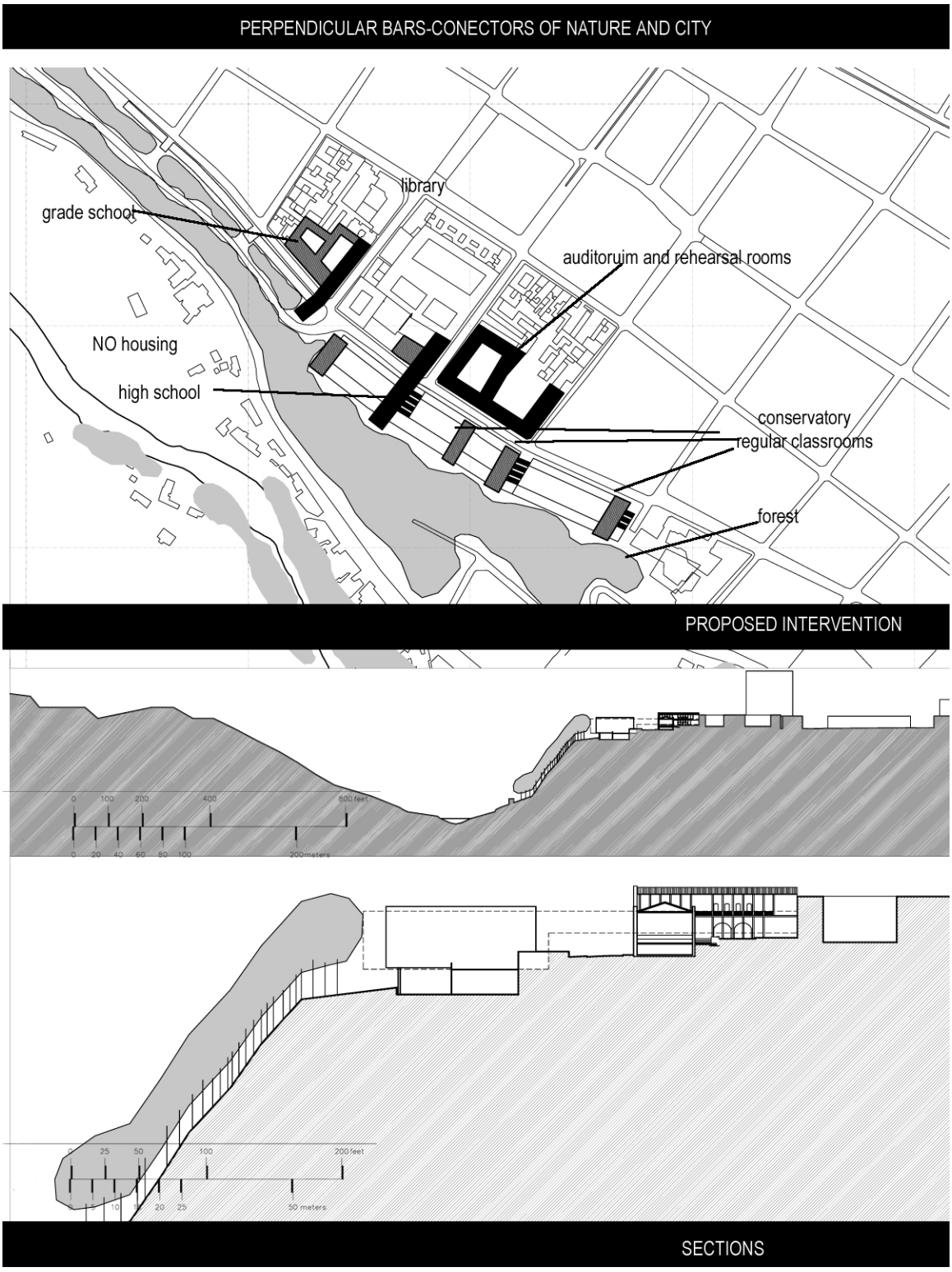


Figure 64. Proposed intervention in context and Sections for "Perpendicular Bars" parti.

Blurred Edges/Tress and Program Intertwined

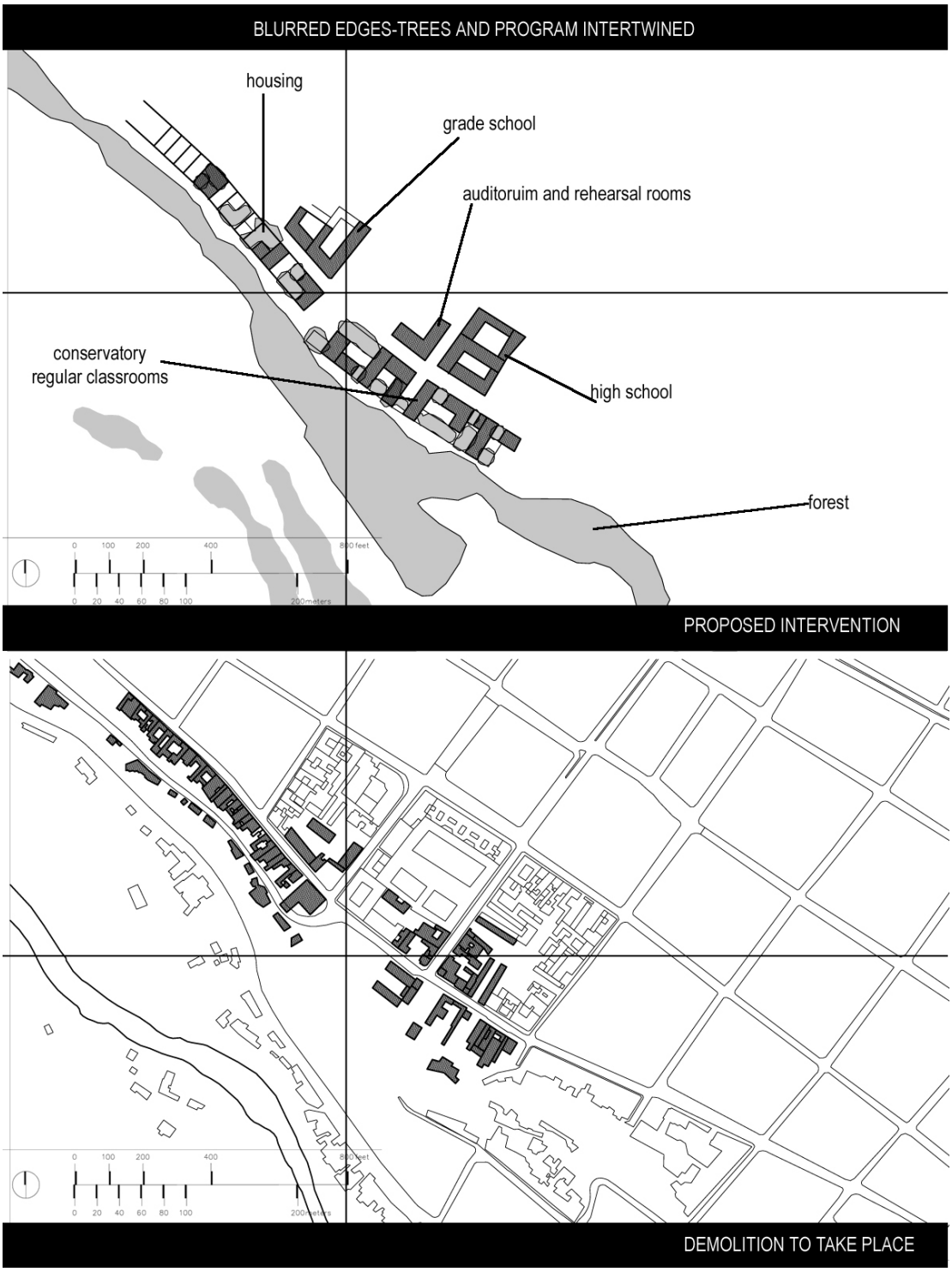


Figure 65. Proposed buildings and Demolition for "Blurred Edges" parti.

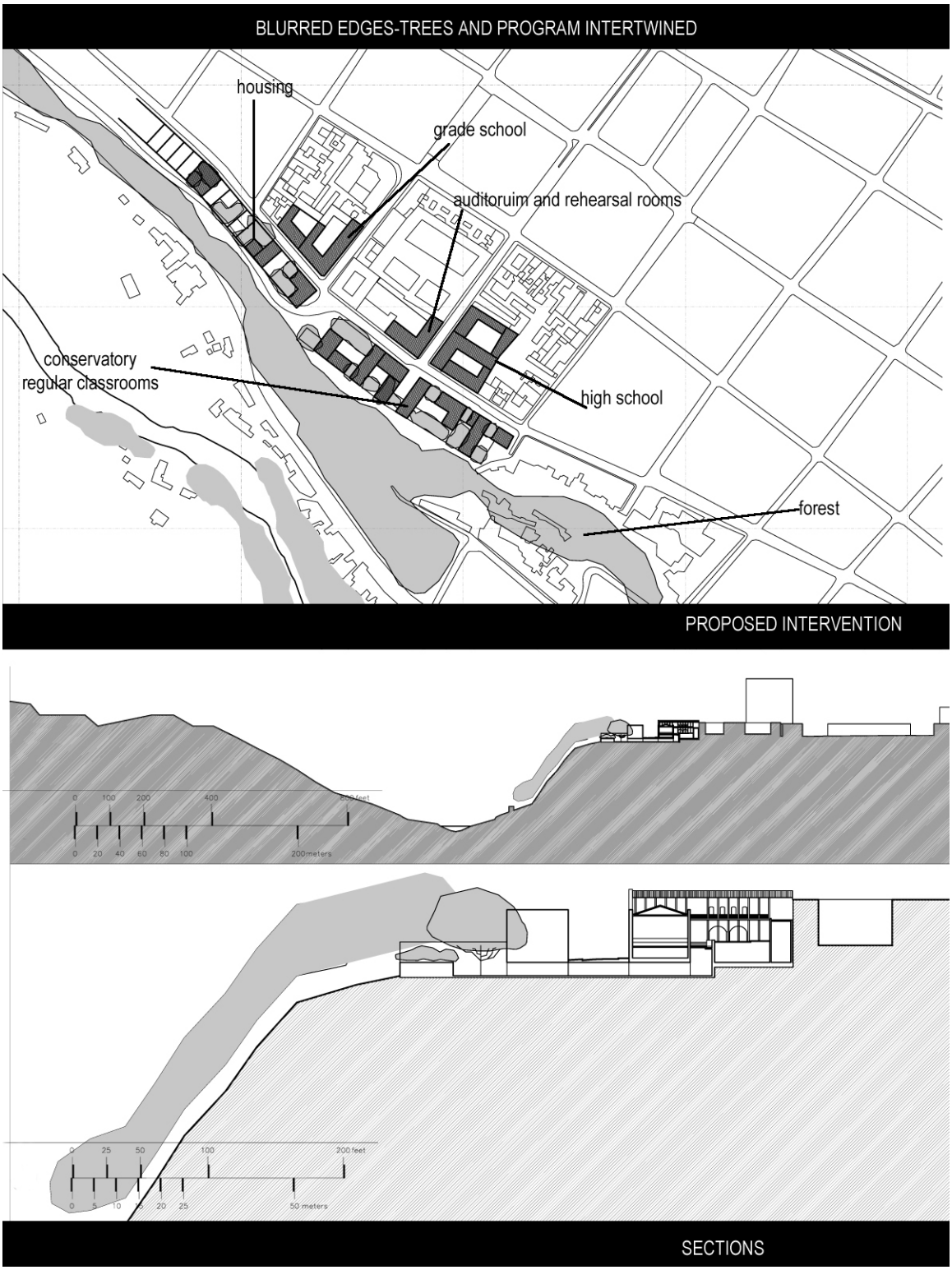


Figure 66. Proposed intervention in context and Sections for "Blurred Edges" parti.

Chapter 6: Final Project and Design Conclusions

As a matter of conclusion to this document, I will present the final drawings of the thesis and describe the project in the terms described in this document. To do so I will follow these steps:

- Firstly, I will define the urban strategies that govern the project. These will determine the nature of "edge" as defined in the first chapter. This definition of edge will govern the massing of the scheme.
- Secondly, I will explain how the program is broken apart and the reasons behind the arrangement of the program. The intentions of the master plan are taken further at the architectural scale and refined in terms of what the buildings "want to be" in the place where they are located.
- Thirdly, I will try to analyze and criticize the end product in light of the goals stated in this document.

After this description I want to add some reflections on the thesis design process with the hope to add some insight from a person with "an outsider's point of view".

Urban Design Intervention

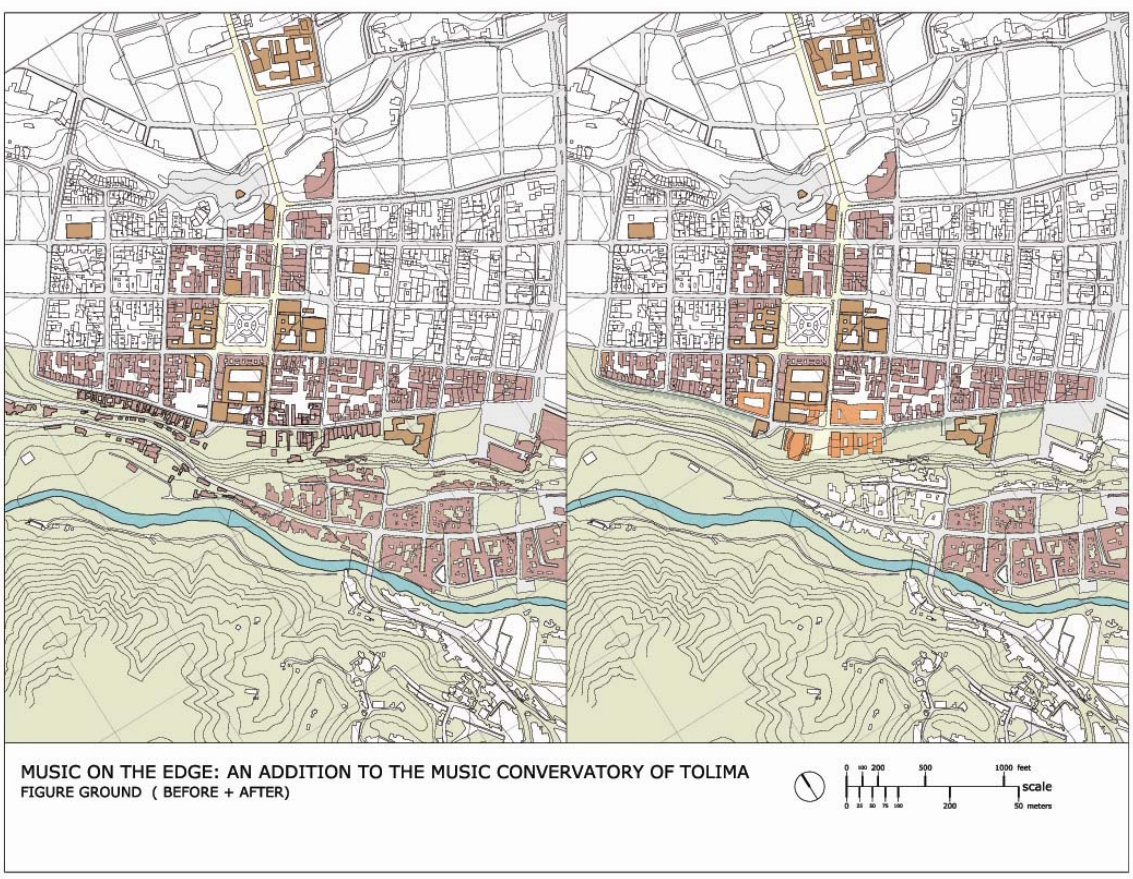


Figure 67. Before and After Figure Grounds.

Carrera 1 is defined as the edge where nature and city meet. The area north of Carrera 1 is urban and the scheme looks to consolidate the blocks with the buildings of the scheme. South of Carrera 1 is a park/natural preservation area line with canopy trees. This park communicates with the city by allowing important Calles penetrate the park and allow for viewing areas to the valley below. The most important viewing area is a plaza that terminates Calle 10. This plaza acts as both the most important viewing platform of the city and the main entrance point to the conservatory complex.

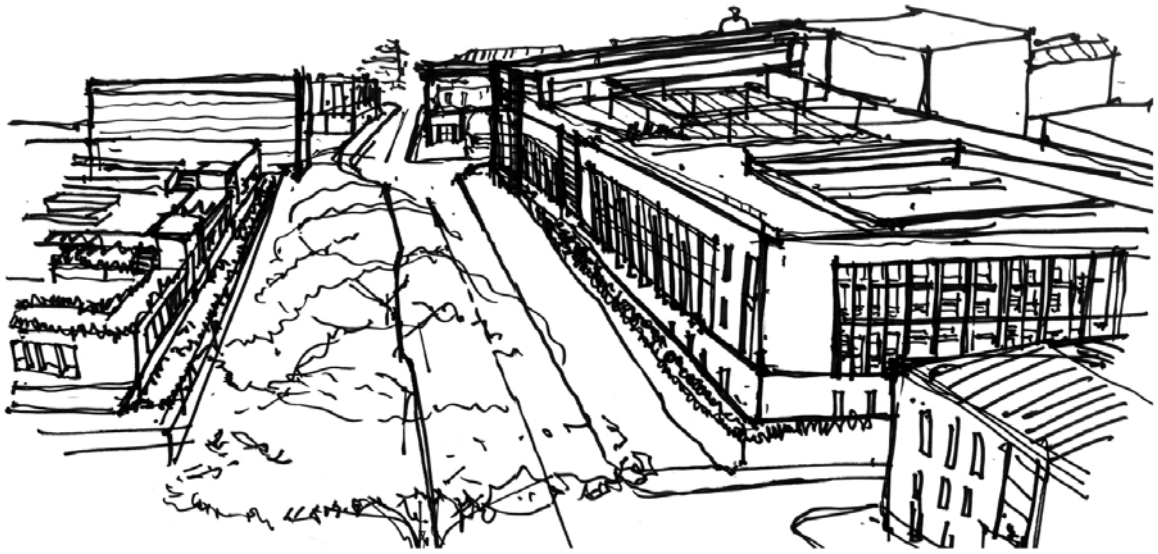


Figure 68. View of Proposed Carrera 1.

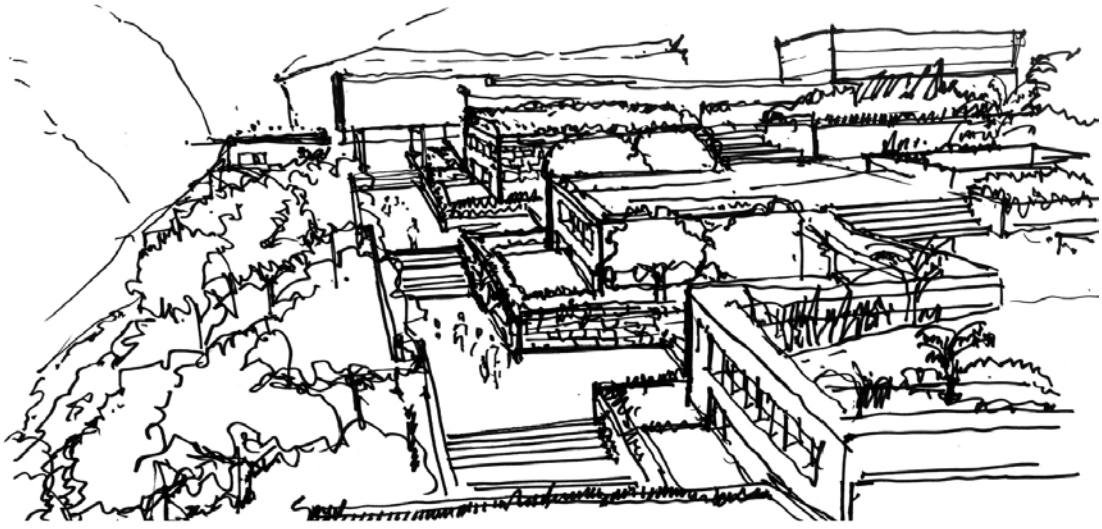


Figure 69. View of propsed edge condition.

Architectural Intervention

Figure 70. View of Main Plaza from the south.

The Plaza is the heart of the project: the entrances to the old complex, the High School Building, the Concert Hall and Theater all face the Plaza. This plaza is meant to terminate Calle 10 with a grand generous gesture, with a lobby for the city where the citizen can enjoy the view and/or enter the most important performance spaces of the program. These, in addition to a library and the Alberto Castilla Music Hall, are semi-public in nature, meaning that the student body will present their work and achievement to the city in this grand complex of buildings and square. This space is the main interface with the rest of the region and also the space where music, city and nature co-exist.

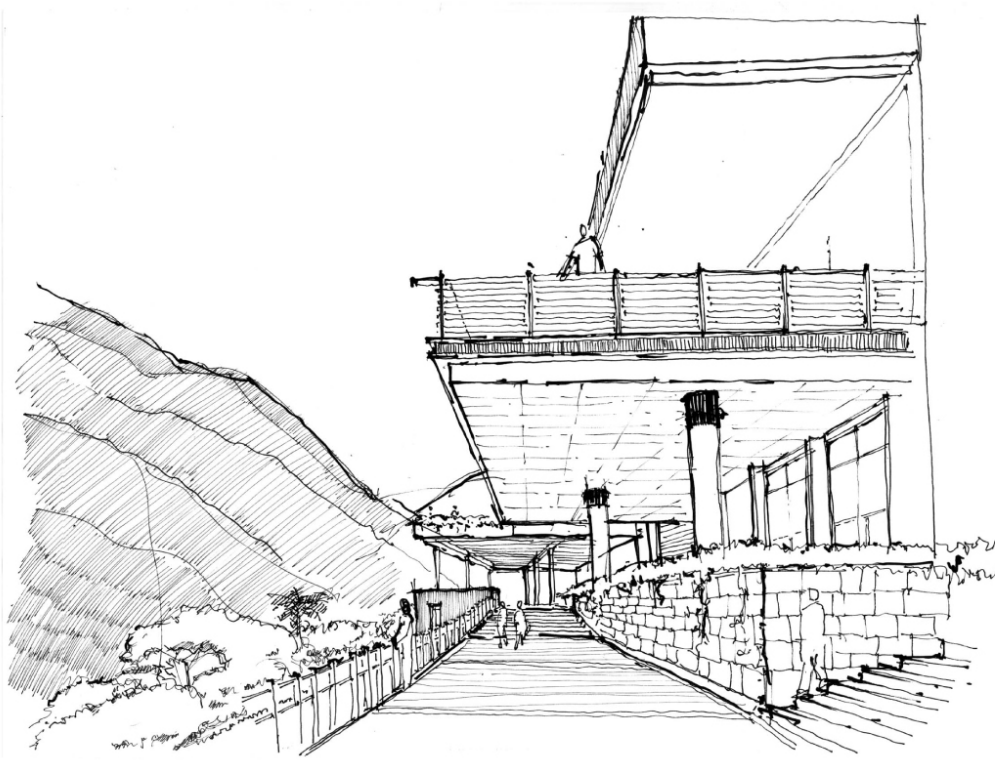


Figure 71. Mountain side walk view of University Buildings and landscape.

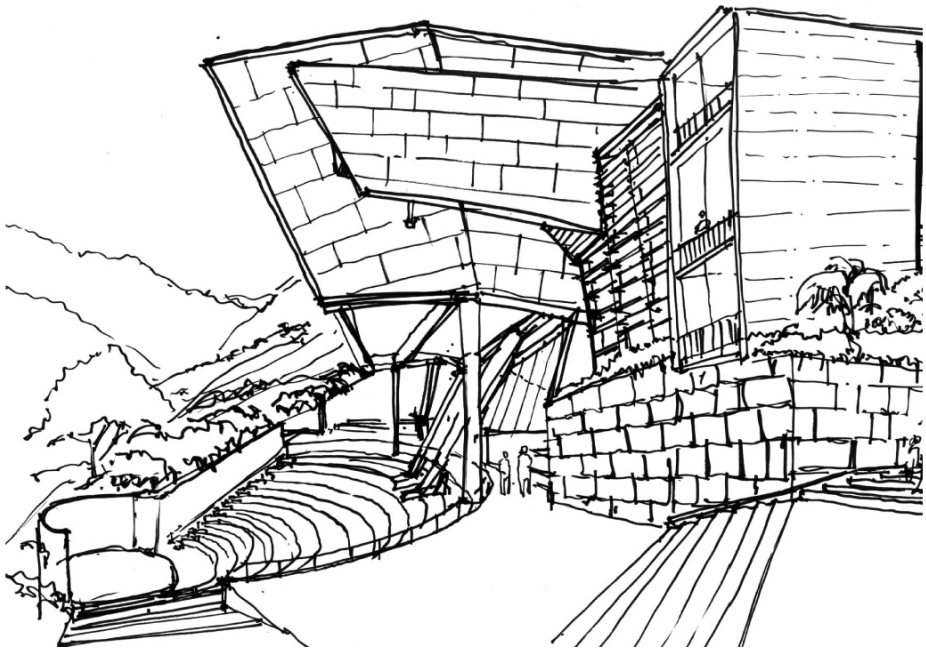


Figure 72. View of Outdoor performance area and Concert Hall.

Figure 73. Second Level Plan

Figure 74. First Level Plan

The area north of Carrera 1 incorporates lessons form other buildings in the city. By using and re-interpreting the courtyard typology, the elementary school and the High School fill the gaps left open in the block while the library and seminar rooms complement the existing cloister and Alberto Castilla Music Hall. All of these facilities are loosely connected by having their entrances face the Calles in proximity. This is done to allow as much communication as possible between the different levels and facilities on this area of the site.

Figure 75. "Nolli" type diagram showing the pedestrian connections of buildings north of Carrera 1.

Figure 76. Consercutive sections parallel to Carrera 1.

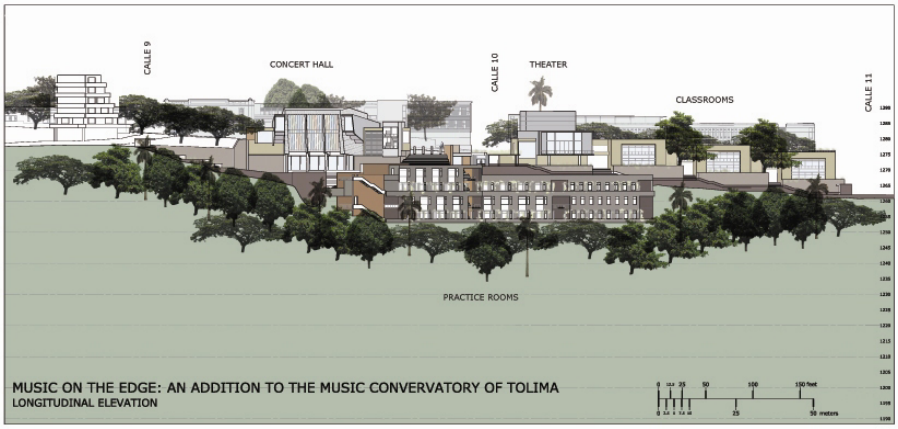


Figure 77. Main Façade. View from the south.

The area south of Carrera 1 is more ingrained with nature. The typologies of building try to maximize the contact with vegetation and allow plenty of opportunities to enjoy the view. This area's spine is a Mountain side promenade from which students can access multiple levels of classrooms to the north and private rehearsal rooms to the south. This promenade culminates in an open performance space that is sheltered by the cantilevering of the concert hall. The buildings, though grounded to the site, also yearn to jump out into the void of the valley. This gesture in the massing of the project affects the shape of the promenade while adding an element of poetry to the arrangement of the masses. I identify this yearning to "jump" with a deep desire to experience the sublime scale of the valley, the big void created by the mountains.

Figure 78. Section of conservatory through the Combeima River Valley.

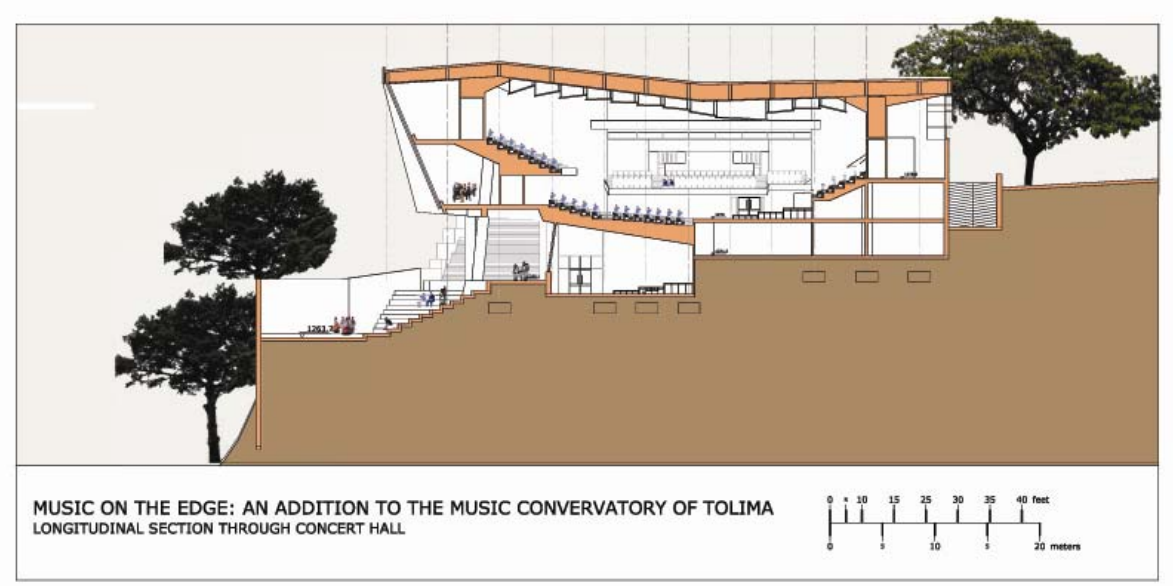


Figure 79. Longitudinal section through concert Hall.

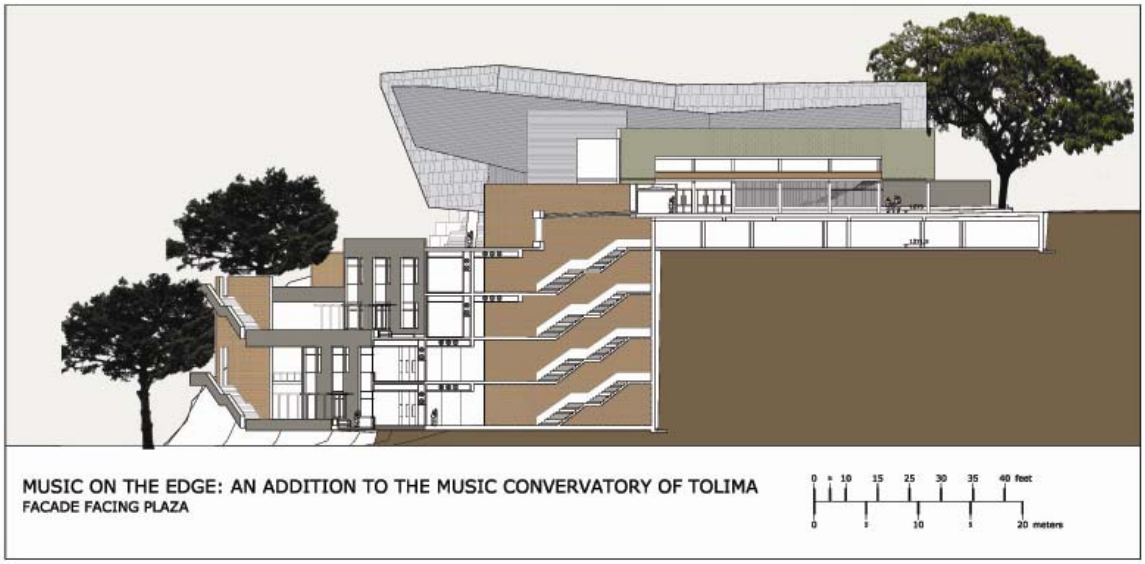


Figure 80. Section through Private Practice Building and Façade of Concert Hall.

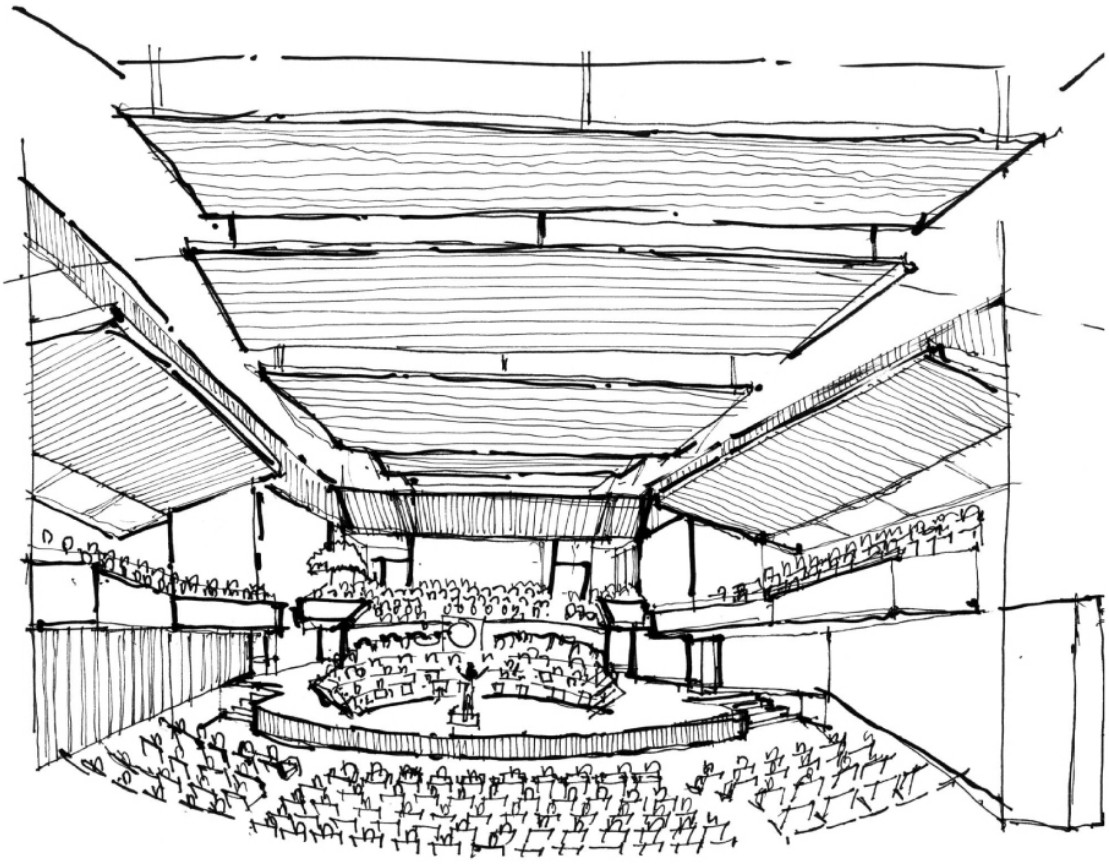


Figure 81. Interior view of Concert Hall.

Conclusions

Project Conclusions

The fragmented nature of the parti chosen is based on the acceptance of a fact: Ibague is a city that grows in spurts. Homogeneity is not the rule and I believe that is not even desirable. The charm and character of the urban tissue lies in the fact that all these different moments in the history of the city co-exist within a set framework. The urban structure of the streets and the block has proven to be very flexible and accommodating to the changing needs of the city.

This urban structure has only a big flaw: it cannot handle areas of steep topography. These areas of the city need to be built with alternative typologies that take advantage of their condition. The adjacency of these types with the old city fabric can be mediated with the clear definition of an edge, a "seam", a point of contact. I believe the best way to do this is by defining the street as the edge and the seam.

By clearly defining the areas that are not to be built upon, the city can then use these areas as public amenities that can increase the value of the property adjacent to them. The incredible view that is available to the city can be an amenity that could spark the development of a great edge street, namely Carrera 1.

The conservatory should be the institution that should show the way to make best use of this land and this view. Its role as a cultural beacon of the city gives this institution great responsibility. In order to do so, the conservatory can make use of different pieces arranged together around one big space. In the long run the buildings

may or may not be memorable, but the view and the events that happen within happen.

I believe this design is successful in encapsulating the principles and goals mentioned in the document. The project provides a square and termination to Calle 10 where city and conservatory can interface with the common background of the landscape. The fragments of the program add to the sense of "polyphony" mentioned in the first portion of the document, where different architectural languages co-exist as notes of a magnificent chord.

The project has some flaws. On the one hand, the relationship of the buildings to Carrera 1 is very hermetic and do not add life to the street. The scale of some of the buildings , specially the High School building, is more monumental than what I would have liked. These flaws are the product of not handling the scope of the project well enough and also by focusing too much on the southern facades of the scheme.

Process Conclusions

As the semester has progressed and I have received more and more input from my committee, I started to understand the following things: on the one hand the ambition of a thesis project in this school is something that for better or worse has to be kept at a moderate scale to solve "technical problems"; on the other hand, progress is slow when trying to incorporate as many ideas as possible into the gestational stages of the project. Although I have a "north" with the project in terms of the initial objectives that were set last semester, I feel that most of my effort is rushed and

stones were left unturned. Time management is not the issue. The issue is the ultimate satisfactory level that is demanded on the student.

I come from an educational background in which 5 years of design studio were taught with rigor and high demand on "poetics". These "poetics" informed the "mundane" aspects of the project and governed the rest. But the problem with this particular approach is that a project's success relied on the student's ability to identify and articulate an adequate set of "poetic" concepts that gave the project transcendence and coherence. The emphasis on this type of approach was on personal discovery of sensibilities and the ultimate realization of the unique perceptive abilities of the student to resolve a stated architectural problem. In most cases, students did not have the talent or the sensibility to grab onto an idea of transcendence.

The background that I described governs my design decision making. I am not particularly talented but I have developed the ability to reach "moments of poetics" in the conception of design. This, as mentioned above, is very hard to achieve. Solutions in architectural problems are not necessarily hard to arrive at, even though all architecture requires a great amount of consideration in many aspects. I do not have a problem providing solutions to architectural problems. Many items of design are pretty straight forward. The issue to me is whether the sum of the elements that make up a building is enough to make the spirit soar.

I believe this important quality of architecture tends to be a by-product in this school. The level of students receiving a Master's degree is more than adequate for young professionals to enter the field. A Maryland graduate is sure to be an excellent employee: he/she is well-rounded in design, technological and professional aspects.

The problem lies in the lack of consideration of "transcendental" aspects at the beginning of the design process. As much as the technological and sustainable aspects need consideration from the inception of the architectural problem, the "poetics" also need clarification and development along the design process. This aspect is not criticized enough. This aspect does not seem to be part of the "big idea" criticism.

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